Atalig OK'd to take part in assembly in Guam. PAGE 5
Justices vacate sanction order vs ex-prosecutor Weintraub. PAGE 8

Hafa Adai!

Saipan Tribune

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Man drowns at Bird Island

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
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REPORTER

New Year's Day came with grim news about a 22-year-old man who drowned off the shores of Bird Island.

Akiyama Eiki, a Japanese male, was pronounced dead at the Commonwealth Heath Center on Jan. 1, 2019, at 2:55pm after drowning off Bird Island.

According to a report from the Department of Fire and Emergency Medical Services, they received a call from the Department of Public Safety's dispatch last Tuesday about a distressed swimmer at Bird Island.

At 1:22pm, Medic 2 and Engine 3 from the Garapan fire station and Rescue 1 from the Su-

See MAN on Page 4

GETTING READY
The empty field on the south side of the Northern Marianas College campus in As Terlaje in being graded and prepared for the installation of temporary classrooms, to enable the college to resume morning classes.
KIMBERLY BAUTISTA

Zero bankruptcy cases in 2018

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
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REPORTER

For the first time in over a decade, there were no bankruptcy petitions filed in the CNMI in 2018.

A check by *Saipan Tribune* yesterday with the U.S. District Court for the NMI's Bankruptcy Division confirmed that no individual or business filed a bankruptcy petition in 2018.

Some people said the CNMI's good economy last year was possibly a factor for the zero bankruptcy case.

Attorneys Timothy H. Bellas and Alexis Fallon handle most of the bankruptcy cases in the CNMI. The two lawyers, however, have been off-island for some time now.

When asked about this latest develop-

See ZERO on Page 4

Salary bill heads back to Torres, again

By JON PEREZ
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REPORTER

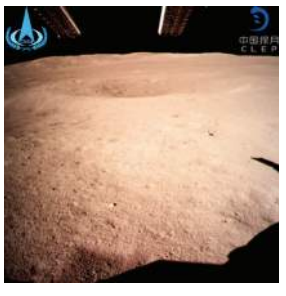
Despite the conflicting opinions of the lawyers of the Senate and House of Representatives, the Senate passed yesterday a bill that would set a new salary for members of the Legislature.

This was the second time that they passed a legislation on the lawmakers' compensation after also acting on a similar measure, House Bill 20-194, in November last year.

All seven Senate members present—Senate President Arnold I. Palacios (R-Saipan), Senate vice president Steve K. Mesngon (R-Rota), floor leader Francisco M. Borja (R-Tinian), legislative secretary Justo S. Quitugua (Ind-Saipan), and Sen. Francisco Q. Cruz (R-Tinian), Jude U. Hofschneider (R-Tinian),

See SALARY on Page 4

INSIDE



ASIA
A Chinese spacecraft makes the first-ever landing on the far side of the moon.
PAGE 21

WORLD
Six passengers are killed when a Danish train sustained damage while crossing a bridge.
PAGE 22

LIFE & STYLE
Netflix said 45 million subscribers watched the Sandra Bullock thriller "Bird Box."
PAGE 24

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Local

Same-sex marriages top number of church marriages

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The number of same-sex marriages topped the number of marriages done in church, based on the Saipan Mayor's Office records for January through September 2018.

Saipan Tribune learned over the weekend that the Saipan Mayor's Office has been recording more same-sex marriages compared to church marriages in the first three quarters of 2018, mirroring the same trend in 2017 within the same period.

From January through September 2018 alone, the mayor's office conducted a total of 96 same-sex marriages—59 same-sex female marriages and 37 same-sex male marriages.

Within the same span, the office recorded only 31 church marriages with February 2018, or the month of Valentine's Day, yielding no marriages at all.

Same-sex marriage from January to September 2015 through the same span in 2018 had been steadily increasing in numbers while church marriages for the same period have been declining.

In 2016, from January to September, the mayor's office recorded 238 church weddings, dwarfing the prior year's 20 marriages for the same months in 2015. Only 67 church marriages followed in 2017's January to September, while 2018 yielded only 31 church marriages, the second lowest within the four-year span.

In 2015, when same-sex marriage became legal in the CNMI, only 12 couples were married as per the mayor's office data. The year 2016 had 30, while 2017 jumped to 75 total marriages before peaking at the current data for 2018 at 96. The numbers reflect only the span from January to September.

The Saipan Mayor's Office noted that they have yet to record marriages conducted for October 2018 onwards since the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu late in the month forced the office to prioritize cleanup and recovery efforts.

Altogether, the Saipan Mayor's Office collected over $7.5 million from January through September 2018 from issuing marriage licenses.

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$5K bail set for man who punched girlfriend

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The NMI Superior Court imposed yesterday a bail of $5,000 on a man who allegedly punched his girlfriend in the face during a heated argument.

Superior Court Associate Judge Kenneth Govendo issued the bail order for Lucio Litulumar Saures, who has been charged with assault and battery and disturbing the peace.

In the bail order, the 48-year-old Saures' bail was set at $5,000 but the court has allowed his release if he posts 10 percent of his initial bail.

Saures remains in the custody of the Department of Corrections and is set for a preliminary hearing on Jan. 9 at 9am.

According to police, Saures assaulted his girlfriend at the Sonoda Apartment in Garapan last Jan. 1. Saures allegedly punched his girlfriend in the face during an argument and left her on the ground and took their children.

Police were dispatched to the apartment in response to a report of a disturbance on Jan. 1 at 3:29am.

Upon arriving at the scene, a police officer met with the victim, identified as Saures' partner.

The victim told police that she was sitting on the curb of the road waiting on the New Year countdown when Saures arrived and allegedly started arguing with her.

The victim said she brought the argument to the back side of the apartment complex so that no one would see them arguing, but Saures allegedly got angrier and punched the victim in the face. Police reported a bruise on the victim's face.

During a follow-up investigation, it was learned that one of the victim's children allegedly witnessed the scene.

The 14-year-old child allegedly saw the argument and saw Saures punch the victim and left her unconscious on the ground before taking them away from the apartment.

Saures was arrested at the MIHA housing.

McDonald's donates $5K for SV parish renovations

By KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA
kimberly_bautista@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

McDonald's Guam/Saipan donated $5,000 yesterday to repair the San Vicente Parish church, which sustained extensive damage from Super Typhoon Yutu.

McDonald's Guam/Saipan owner/operator Marcia Ayuyu presented the company's donation to Bishop Ryan Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa and Fr. Jason Granado of the San Vicente Parish church.

According to Jimenez, "San Vicente is one of the churches on Saipan that was damaged badly by Super Typhoon Yutu."

Granado said that church's three skylights and windows, among others, were badly damaged, but they could not start with the repairs and renovations because the parish wants to focus its resources on people who were affected by the typhoon.

"The church suffered extensive damage. …It was really a big loss for our parish. … [But] our immediate task in the first couple of months after the typhoon was to take care of the needs of the people, like those families that lost their homes, to provide spiritual needs," he said

According to Ayuyu, McDonald's decided to donate to the San Vicente Parish because they saw the help and support the parish gave its parishioners after Yutu.

"On behalf of my family, my husband and my children, we want to thank [Jimenez and Granado] for their love and support for the community. It's a continuous love for the community. …They reached out to the community. This donation will really help [Granado] in continuing the repairs…I hope other businesses will donate also. …[Whether a lot or not]…it'll really help the church," she said.

Jimenez and Granado said it's through individuals like Joe and Maricia Ayuyu that the much-needed repairs to the church can begin.

"The Ayuyu family…is always there for the church, for Karidat [Social Services], and for their parish, San Vicente. …We didn't really go out and ask for help because, of course, our priority is our people…but I'm so grateful for this gesture of generosity from Marcia and their family. …This is good news," said Jimenez.

McDonald's Guam/Saipan owner/operator Marcia Ayuyu, far right, hands a $5,000 check to Bishop Ryan Jimenez, second from the right, and San Vicente Parish's Fr. Jason Granado, third from the right, that would go to the needed renovations to the San Vicente Parish as a result of Super Typhoon Yutu.

KIMBERLY A. BAUTISTA

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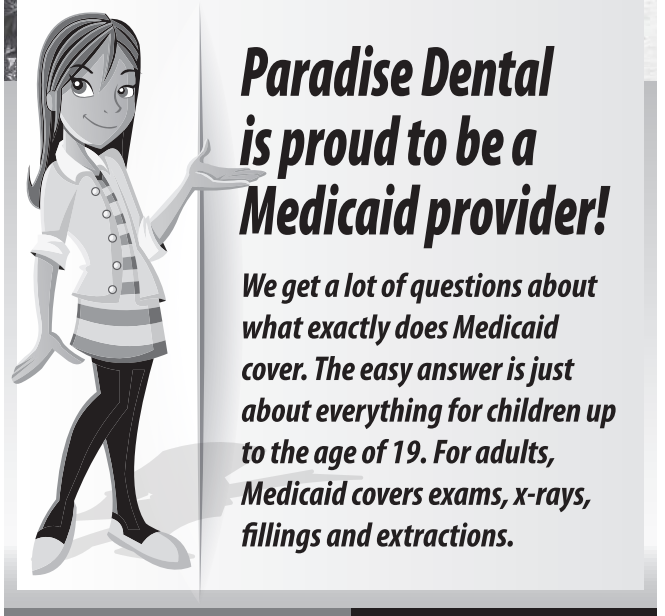
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DONATION
The Lady Diann Torres Foundation Dandan Marianas and the Music of the Marianas Association present a large amount of donation to the Department of Public Safety-Tinian and the Department of Fire Emergency and Medical Services-Tinian. Eric Reyes, founder of Taotao Taga Dance Academy, led the presentation of the donation.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

HOUSE RESOLUTION
Dr. Bobby Cruz, Ed.D. joins his family and members of the House of Representatives after receiving a special resolution honoring his works and other contributions to the CNMI in the field of education.
JON PEREZ

MAN

From Page 1

supe fire station responded and arrived at the scene at 1:35pm.

EMS first responders then went down on foot along the trail to Bird Island where the victim was located.

A bystander was already doing chest compressions on the victim in an attempt to revive him. The bystander told EMS personnel that he found the unconscious victim underwater and pulled him out and immediately performed cardiovascular pulmonary resuscitation on him until the EMS personnel arrived.

The victim was placed on a spine board and carried back up the trail and brought to CHC's emergency room. The victim was pronounced dead at 2:55pm on the same day by CHC's Dr. Nick Villalone.

Eiki is the first reported death-by-drowning incident of 2019.

A high surf advisory is also in effect until 7am today. Also, a small craft advisory is in effect until 6pm Tuesday next week due to a high risk of rip currents through Tuesday afternoon.

Based on information received from the National Weather Service in Tiyan, Guam, and compiled at the CNMI Emergency Operations Center State Warning Point, large swells will continue to produce hazardous surf and dangerous rip currents on Saipan, Tinian, and Rota.

ZERO

From Page 1

ment, Bellas, who is currently in the U.S. mainland, said yesterday he was gone as well from the CNMI for nine months last year.

"Not to sound conceited and this would be pure speculation on my part because we really don't know for sure, but that could be part of the reason that people have not been pursuing that remedy," said Bellas in an email.

In 2017, five bankruptcy cases were filed in the District Court. Except for Saipan Sea Ventures, all cases were filed by individuals.

In 2016, only four bankruptcy cases were filed. All were individuals.

In 2015, eight bankruptcy cases were filed, including that of Tinian Dynasty Hotel & Casino.

In 2005, 31 bankruptcy cases were filed, the all-time highest record of such cases in the CNMI.

SALARY

From Page 1

and Sixto K. Igisomar (R-Saipan)—voted yes.

Palacios and Quitugua later said in jest that they hope the bill won't return to the Legislature again. If it does, Palacios said he is giving up on the matter; Quitugua said he would not support another legislation on the salary bill.

Rep. Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan) again introduced the salary legislation, House 20-195, and it will once more go to the desk of Gov. Ralph DLG Torres for signing.

H.B. 20-195 sets the annual salary of incoming members of the 21st CNMI Legislature at $32,000.

Torres needs to act on the bill before the Jan. 14 inauguration. Otherwise, the salary of lawmakers would go down to $8,000, based on the ruling of the CNMI Supreme Court that Public Law 19-83 was unconstitutional. P.L. 19-83 raised the salaries of legislators to $70,000, an 80-percent increase.

The Supreme Court, in September last year, stated in *Manibusan v. Larson* that P.L. 19-83 and the two previous salary increases—P.L. 4-32 and P.L. 7-31—violate Article II Section X of the CNMI Constitution.

Deleon Guerrero introduced H.B. 20-194 that both legislative bodies passed last year, but then-acting governor Victor B. Hocog vetoed it as he believes the $39,300 recommendation made by the Advisory Commission on Compensation of Commonwealth Executive, Legislative, and Judicial officers did not follow the Supreme Court's proposal.

Quitugua asked during deliberations yesterday if his vote on the bill constitutes a conflict of interest since he would return as a member of the 21st Legislature.

If that were the case, then no CNMI budget would be passed, Hofschneider said. "Every year we vote on a CNMI budget and if the Constitution would be our basis, does that make us in conflict since we are voting for our salaries too that's also established in the bill?"

Senate legal counsel Josde Bermudes sided with Hofschneider. "If we follow Sen. Hofschneider's argument on the bills that have an effect on the financial interest of the legislators and fiscal budget that includes salaries of [legislators], then everybody is conflicted. We can't pass the budget."

He, however, had a different opinion when it comes to the three-fourth vote needed when the House passed the bill in their last session on Dec. 10. Only seven of the 17 House members present voted after the other 10 recused themselves due to conflict of interest since they would be returning to the 21st Legislature.

The 10 returning members of the House recused themselves at the recommendation of House legal counsel John Cool. Vice speaker Janet U. Maratita (R-Saipan), and Reps. Alice S. Igitol and Donald C. Barcinas were absent.

House Speaker Rafael S. Demapan (R-Saipan), floor leader Glenn L. Maratita (R-Rota), and Reps. Francisco C. Aguon (R-Saipan), Edwin P. Aldan (R-Tinian), Joseph P. Deleon Guerrero (R-Saipan), Angel A. Demapan (R-Saipan), and Gregorio M. Sablan Jr. (R-Saipan) were the only ones allowed to vote.

Minority leader Edmund S. Villagomez (Ind-Saipan) along with Reps. Blas Jonathan Attao (Ind-Saipan), Ivan A. Blanco (R-Saipan), Francisco S. Dela Cruz (R-Saipan), Lorenzo I. Deleon Guerrero (Ind-Saipan), Joseph Leepan T. Guerrero (R-Saipan), Jose I. Itibus (R-Saipan), Edwin K. Propst (Ind-Saipan), John Paul P. Sablan (R-Saipan), Vinnie Vinson F. Sablan (Ind-Saipan) recused themselves in the voting.

CNMI Attorney General Edward Manibusan, in a letter to Hofschneider, said the bill is legally sufficient "because it ostensibly satisfied the three-pronged test in *Manibusan v. Larson 2018*."

Manibusan said the proposed salary in H.B. 20-195 is based on the consumer price index that was published by the U.S. Department of Commerce and it is within the percentage change of the accepted CPI from January 1978 to September 2018, the most recent CPI referred to by the commission. The $32,000 proposed salary also does not exceed the commission's recommendation.

Atalig OK'd to take part in assembly in Guam

The federal court allowed Rota Mayor Efraim M. Atalig on Wednesday to travel to Guam to attend the general assembly of the Association of Mariana Islands Mayors, Vice Mayors and Elected Municipal Council Members.

Atalig

Atalig will be in Guam from Jan. 8 to 10 to attend the 25th AMIM General Assembly.

In his unopposed motion for permission to travel, Atalig, through his lawyer, David George Banes, said that AMIM is holding its general assembly on Jan. 9, 2019, in Agat, Guam.

He plans to depart on Jan. 8 for Guam and return to Rota on Jan. 10.

Banes said that counsel for the U.S. government has indicated he would not oppose allowing Atalig to travel to Guam to attend the assembly. Banes attached in Atalig's request a copy of a memorandum signed by Tinian mayor and current AMIM president Joey P. San Nicholas, who invited all AMIM members to attend the session.

Last September a federal grand jury indicted Atalig after he allegedly arranged a government-funded trip from Rota to Guam for himself and 12 other persons, including eight municipal employees, on a false claim that he was going to check for surplus equipment at the Naval Base in Guam. Actually, he allegedly went to participate in a political rally last June 23 in Mangilao.

The indictment charged Atalig with one count of wire fraud.

The Office of the Attorney General also filed on the same day criminal charges in the Superior Court against Atalig and seven others Rota municipal officials in connection with the Guam political rally.

Atalig was re-elected as Rota mayor during the Nov. 13 election.

Last Nov. 28, the U.S. government filed a superseding indictment in federal court charging Atalig and his girlfriend, Evelyn Atalig, with five corruption charges for allegedly arranging CNMI government-funded trips to California, Palau, Guam, and Saipan under fraudulent pretenses.

The jury trial in the federal case will commence on March 12, 2019 at 10am.

Atalig pleaded not guilty in both cases. ***(Ferdie De La Torre)***

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IT&E supports Make-A-Wish, disaster relief

IT&E provided more than 1,000 solar lamps to help families without power in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu. IT&E presented the lamps to the CNMI Office of the Governor, acting governor Victor B. Hocog, U.S. Department of Defense, Federal Emergency Management Agency, Marianas Young Professionals, the Saipan Marianas Lions Club, and Bishop Ryan P. Jimenez of the Diocese of Chalan Kanoa on Dec. 7.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

Wish Kid Isaac Baza and his family accept an iPad from IT&E on Dec. 22.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IT&E helps the Guam International Airport "Deck it's Halls" to raise funds for the First Lady Diann Torres Foundation. From left, Danny Daniel, senior manager of Brand and Public Relations of IT&E; Kristina Tajalle, marketing coordinator of IT&E; Donovan Tudela, representative of the Lady Diann Torres Foundation; and Joy White, content specialist of IT&E.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

IT&E was reminded of the meaning of hope after a visit from Isaac Baza, one of the beneficiaries of the Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam and CNMI.

Baza, a Wish Kid with a joyful smile, was presented with an iPad from IT&E on Dec. 22 as part of his wish for a shopping spree.

IT&E partnered with the Make-A-Wish Foundation Guam and CNMI to help make Baza's special wish come true.

"We're happy to brighten Isaac's spirits and give him the encouragement he needs to overcome any challenge he faces," said Danny Daniel, senior manager of Brand and Public Relations at IT&E. "His resilience is truly inspiring. Make-A-Wish Foundation's mission of spreading hope is one that we wholeheartedly support."

December was truly a month of giving. IT&E also donated more than 1,000 solar lamps valued at $100,000 to the CNMI Office of the Governor to help families that are still without power in the aftermath of Super Typhoon Yutu.

IT&E also joined Guam businesses to support the Guam International Airport's "Deck Our Halls and Give" campaign to raise funds for the Lady Diann Torres Foundation. A total of $3,800 was raised through the airport's campaign to assist the foundation's Super Typhoon Yutu relief and recovery efforts.

IT&E remains committed to doing its part to help the community thrive, protect, and develop our youth, promote health and wellness, preserve the environment, and honor the vibrant cultures of the Marianas and Guam. ***(PR)***

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#Marianas-STRONG event draws large crowd

Concepcion

Residents and visitors turned out en masse on Saturday, Dec. 29, for the #MarianasSTRONG Year-end Celebration at Paseo de Marianas in Garapan, marking the resiliency and recovery of the Marianas following Super Typhoon Yutu in October 2018 and welcoming the New Year.

Long lines packed the pedestrian mall for free bouncy house turns for children, free Saipan- da backpacks and other giveaways, and free samples of mochi, the traditional Japanese New Year's dish. Other patrons pounded glutinous rice to make mochi, played games, enjoyed street food and live entertainment, or donated to typhoon relief efforts.

The event kicked off at 5pm with 97 participants in the Yutu 5K Holiday Fun Run. Runners took off wearing holiday hats and earned a fun run T-shirt upon completion. For having the best holiday costumes, Jessa Lynn Lizama won $75 as a reindeer, Yui Ito won $50 as a Christmas tree, and Rom Manzon won $25 as Spiderman.

The event, organized by the Marianas Visitors Authority, PDM Promoters, Japanese Society of the Northern Mariana Islands, and Japan Northern Marianas Descent Association, continued until 10pm. The celebration was sponsored by IT&E, DFS Saipan, and Coca-Cola & Foremost/Quench.

"The #MarianasSTRONG Year-end Celebration was a huge success," said MVA managing director Christopher A. Concepcion. "The crowd was larger than we expected. The vendors even ran out of food! We thank the community, our visitors, and our many sponsors and donors for saying loud and proud that we are #MarianasSTRONG and that we will continue to help all those families and individuals in still in recovery as we enter 2019."

Over $1,000 cash was donated for typhoon relief efforts. Proceeds will be given to Karidat Social Services and other relief effort organizations.

Entertainment kicked off with a festively clad Marianas Ukelele, followed by a youthful Saipan Music & Dance Studio. Magician Neil Fama invited members of the audience to participate in his sleight of hand, Studio 29:11 delivered soulful modern dance, Alana'Ia shared colorful Polynesian dances, Man Antigu brought a taste of indigenous Chamorro culture to the event, and Su-san Band closed the evening with an ensemble of sax, trombone, tuba...and jingling bells.

Participating food vendors were Kinpachi Restaurant, Ina's Kitchen, and Furusato Restaurant. ***(MVA)***

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PILOT
ODYSSEY
2018 YEAR-END CLEARANCE
HONDA
STOCK # COLOR DISCOUNT
ACCORD SPORT JA127198 STILL NIGHT $3,000
CIVIC TOURING JU219725 RALLYE RED $4,000
HRV EX 2WD JM702620 LUNAR SILVER $3,000
PILOT EX 2WD JB004061 LUNAR SILVER $4,000
HRV EX 2WD SOLD BLACK $4,000
Ford
STOCK # COLOR DISCOUNT
TRANSIT 350 MR JKB19772 OXFORD WHITE $5,000
TRANSIT 350 LR JKA83076 OXFORD WHITE $4,000
TRANSIT 350 HD SOLD $5,000
TRANSIT 150 XL LR JKA83059 OXFORD WHITE $4,000
EXPLORER LTD 4WD JGC88943 PLAT DUNE TRICO $5,000
NISSAN
STOCK # COLOR DISCOUNT
SENTRA S JY250557 FRESH POWDER $3,000
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Justices vacate sanction order vs ex-prosecutor Weintraub

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The CNMI Supreme Court has determined that Superior Court Associate Judge Teresa Kim-Tenorio abused her discretion in imposing a monetary sanction on then-assistant attorney general Elizabeth "Betsy" Weintraub, who served as a prosecutor in a sexual abuse of a minor case against a retired Army reservist.

In a seven-page opinion on Monday, the high court determined that Kim-Tenorio's view of the law was "clearly erroneous" as she imposed the sanction although she could not, and did not, find that Weintraub had acted in bad faith.

The high court vacated the sanction that ordered Weintraub to pay $500 to a nonprofit organization on Saipan that is dedicated to helping sexually abused children.

Associate Justice Perry B. Inos penned the high court's opinion. Chief Justice Alexandro C. Castro and Associate Justice John A. Manglona concurred.

Weintraub told *Saipan Tribune* yesterday that she is grateful to the CNMI Supreme Court for reviewing the matter and reaching a decision supported by law.

"I am not the victim in this case, however, and the victim still deserves justice," said Weintraub, who now resides in the U.S. mainland.

Now that the Supreme Court has corrected this issue, Weintraub said, her hope is that the Attorney General will correct the greater injustice to the victim by refiling the charges against the defendant, Michael Murphy.

In vacating the sanction, the justices said they are convinced that Kim-Tenorio relied on her "inherent authority" in sanctioning Weintraub.

The justices said the judge notably took issue with Weintraub's allegedly inefficient case management, lack of preparation, and waste of resources.

The justices said the judge was particularly dismayed by the multiple continuances and Weintraub's inability to meet the extended discovery deadline.

The justices said Kim-Tenorio found that to further extend the discovery deadline would prejudice Murphy.

The justices, however, found that such conduct "falls in the normal course of litigation and is done for the benefit of the victim."

Weintraub

Citing precedent where the conduct at issue included failing to prepare defendants for trial and requesting a continuance, the justices said that, in Murphy's case, the lack of preparation and requests for numerous continuances were done in the normal course of litigation.

Citing another precedent, the justices said that Weintraub did not lie or attempt to deceive the court.

While Kim-Tenorio may disagree with Weintraub's conduct, her actions were nonetheless done on behalf of the Commonwealth, the justices said.

The justices said that because the court sanctioned Weintraub for conduct done in the normal course of litigation or for the benefit of the Commonwealth, they need to determine whether there was a finding of bad faith.

The justices said Kim-Tenorio specifically noted that "while [the court] sympathizes with all victims of sexual abuse cases, alleged or otherwise, [Weintraub]'s motives are irrelevant as she has a duty to advocate within the confines of professional ethics."

The justices said Kim-Tenorio was incorrect.

The justices said since Kim-Tenorio sanctioned Weintraub for conduct done in the normal course of litigation via the court's inherent authority, the prosecutor's motives are paramount—the court was required to find that Weintraub acted with bad faith.

Here, the justices said, Kim-Tenorio determined that Weintraub's conduct, although disagreeable, was not tantamount to bad faith.

In a written order on Sept. 6, 2017, Kim-Tenorio stated that Weintraub's unprofessional conduct and violations of Model Rules of Professional conduct were not isolated incidents, but occurred continuously throughout litigation in the case against Murphy due to her lack of preparation and diligence.

Kim-Tenorio said the cumulative weight of the prosecutor's conduct and violations has wide reach and directly affects multiple government agencies, the public, and most importantly, the alleged victim and Murphy.

Kim-Tenorio, however, denied Murphy's motion for the court to declare that Weintraub committed a prosecutorial misconduct for her alleged false, improper, and prejudicial statement on the record in Murphy's case.

Kim-Tenorio also denied Murphy's request to issue an order for disciplinary investigation against Weintraub and to enjoin the Office of the Attorney General and its agents from making any extrajudicial comments.

The judge noted that she already dismissed the case against Murphy pursuant to the OAG's motion for voluntary dismissal on Aug. 15, 2017.

Moreover, Tenorio said, she addressed the alleged prosecutorial misconduct during the order to show cause hearing on Aug. 29, 2017.

Weintraub then appealed to the CNMI Supreme Court. Assistant attorney general Robert Charles Lee served as counsel for Weintraub in the appeal.

In seeking to vacate the imposition of monetary sanctions, Weintraub asserted that Kim-Tenorio abused her discretion by imposing sanctions without making a determination of bad faith, considering her ability to pay a monetary fine, or supporting the judge's findings of Model Rules of Professional Conduct violations with clear and convincing evidence.

Weintraub also argued that the sanction violated her due process rights in that she was not afforded heightened due process, sufficient notice of the charges against her, or a right to counsel.

She asserted due process violations in failing to make a finding of bad faith, not considering her ability to pay the fine, and relying on law that conflicts with U.S. Supreme Court precedent.

NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

P.O. BOX 500514, Saipan, MP 96950-0514
Email: nmhc@nmhc.gov.mp Website: http://www.nmhcgov.net

COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS
NORTHERN MARIANAS HOUSING CORPORATION

PUBLIC NOTICE

This Notice is paid by NMHC with HUD funds.

COMBINED NOTICE OF FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT AND INTENT TO REQUEST RELEASE OF FUNDS

Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
Office of the Governor
Saipan, MP 96950 • Tel: (670) 237-2200 or (670) 234-9447/6866

This notice shall satisfy the above-cited two separate but related procedural notification requirements.

REQUEST FOR RELEASE OF FUNDS
On or after February 04, 2019, the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands will submit a request to the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, Honolulu Field Office, for the release of Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) Funds under Title 1 of the Housing and Community Development Act of 1974 (PL 93-383), as amended, to undertake the following projects and purposes in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands:

Project/Activity Type	Purpose	Location	Total Project Cost
Koblerville Youth Learning Center Expansion and Enhancement Project	Rehabilitation of the existing building and expand the building. The expansion includes a multi-purpose hall, stage, dressing rooms, restrooms, storage room, electrical room, pump room, generator room, water tank, and parking spaces.	Koblerville Saipan	$435,370.00

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands has determined that the above-listed projects will have no significant impact on the human environment. Therefore, an Environmental Impact Statement under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA) is not required. Additional project information is contained in the Environmental Review Record (ERR) on file at the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation Central Office in Garapan, Saipan and may be examined or copied during regular work hours, Monday through Friday except CNMI or Austerity Holidays, from 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M.

PUBLIC COMMENTS
Any individual, group or agency disagreeing with this determination or wishing to comment on the projects may submit written comments to the Northern Marianas Housing Corporation, P.O. Box 500514, Saipan, MP 96950 or direct delivery to the central office in Garapan, Saipan. All comments received by January 21, 2019, will be considered by the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands prior to authorizing submission of a request for release of funds. Commentors should specify which part of this Notice they are addressing.

RELEASE OF FUNDS
The Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands certifies to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, HUD Honolulu Field Office that the Government of the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands and Acting Governor Victor B. Hocog consent to accept the jurisdiction of the Federal Courts if an action is brought to enforce responsibilities in relation to the environmental review process, and that these responsibilities have been satisfied. The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Honolulu Field Office acceptance of the certification satisfies its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and related laws and authorities, and allows the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands to use Program Funds.

OBJECTION TO RELEASE OF FUNDS
The U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development HUD Honolulu Field Office will accept objections to its release of funds and the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands certification for a period of fifteen days following anticipated submission date or its actual receipt of the request (whichever is later) only if it is on one of the following bases: (a) the certification was not executed by the Certifying Officer of the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands; (b) the Government of the Northern Mariana Islands has omitted a step or failed to make a decision or finding required by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development regulations at 24 CFR Part 58; (c) the grant recipient has incurred cost not authorized by 24 CFR Part 58 before approval of the release of funds by the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development; or (d) another Federal agency acting pursuant to 40 CFR Part 1504 has submitted a written finding that the project is unsatisfactory from the standpoint of environmental quality. Objections must be prepared and submitted in accordance with the required procedures of 24 CFR Part 58 and shall be addressed to the U. S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Honolulu Field Office, 1132 Bishop Street, Suite 1400, Honolulu, Hawaii, 96813. Potential objectors should contact the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to verify the actual last day of the objection period.

/s/ Victor B. Hocog
Acting Governor

Tinian Field Office
Tel: (670)433-9213
Fax: (670)433-3690

"NMHC is an equal employment and fair housing public agency"

Rota Field Office
Tel: (670)532-9410
Fax: (670)532-9441

Commonwealth Utilities Corporation
Office of the Executive Director

REQUEST FOR PROPOSALS
CUC-RFP-19-002

LEASE OF OFFICE SPACE FOR CUC
ROTA ADMINISTRATION & OPERATION

The Office of the Executive Director for the Commonwealth Utilities Corporation (CUC), is soliciting competitive sealed proposals from individuals or firms for the lease of office space for CUC Administration and Operation, Rota, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

The proposed office space must conform to American Disabilities Act (ADA), OSHA and CNMI Zoning regulation.

The RFP package may be obtained at the CUC Procurement and Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, Saipan, between 7:30 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. to 4:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except on government observed holidays, upon completion of registration and presentation of a receipt evidencing a non-refundable payment to the CUC Treasury Section (Saipan, Tinian or Rota), by cash, check or credit card in the amount of $20.00 for one RFP package set. The RFP package will be provided in a CD or emailed to the registered Proponents email ID. Prospective Proposers for this RFP must pre-register with the CUC Procurement & Supply Division to be considered.

One (1) original and Five (5) hard copies must be submitted in a sealed envelope marked "CUC-RFP-19-002, Lease of Office Space for CUC Rota Administration & Operation" to the CUC Procurement & Supply Office, 3rd Floor, Room No. 3, Joeten Dandan Commercial Building, P.O. Box 501220, Saipan, MP 96950, **no later than 10:00 AM (ChST) on January 7, 2019.** Late submissions and conditional proposals will not be considered.

Discussions may be conducted with responsible offerors who submit proposals determined to be reasonably susceptible of being selected for award for the purpose of clarification and to ensure full understanding of and responsiveness to solicitation requirements. Offerors shall be accorded fair and equal treatment with respect to any opportunity to discussion and revision of proposals, and such revision may be permitted after submission and prior to award for the purpose of obtaining the best and final offers. During discussions, there will be no disclosure of any information derived from proposals submitted by competing offerors.
All Offeror are advised that CUC assumes no responsibility in any act of omission on the part of the Offeror due to lack of information or understanding of the proposal requirements in the course of Contractor's preparation of a proposal or supply under the contract. The RFP does not commit CUC to award a contract, to pay any cost incurred in the preparation of the proposal under this request, or to procure or contract for services.

Offeror are required to comply with all CNMI and applicable Federal Laws. This RFP and the ensuing contract shall be executed as per the CUC Procurement Regulations.

Questions or requests for clarification will be entertained only from pre-registered prospective proposers and must be submitted in writing no later than **10:00 AM (ChST) on December 21, 2018** to Manny B. Sablan, CUC Purchasing Administrator via email address manny.sablan@cucgov.org with a copy to Christie Sablan, Senior Purchasing Assistant via email address christie.sablan@cucgov.org.

CUC reserves the right to reject any or all proposals for any reason and to waive any defects in said proposal, if in its sole opinion, to do so would be in the best interest of CUC. All proposals shall become the property of CUC.

GARY CAMACHO
Executive Director

MANNY B. SABLAN
Purchasing Administrator

NMC's PM classes resume Monday

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Northern Marianas College would be resuming its afternoon and evening classes on Monday, Jan. 7, 2019.

Interim NMC president Frankie Eliptico noted that the three-week holiday break officially ends next week and that classes would be resuming in the afternoon at NMC's temporary campus at Saipan Southern High School.

"We're excited to see our students after the holiday season," said Eliptico, who also thanked Education Commissioner Glenn Muña and the officials of SSHS for hosting the NMC students temporarily.

With the As Terlaje campus sustaining extensive damage from Super Typhoon Yutu, Eliptico said the relocation to the high school was necessary to enable the college to continue its fall semester.

Morning classes would resume once the college moves back to its As Terlaje campus on Feb. 11, 2019. The first week of February 2019 also marks the end of the 2018 fall semester at NMC.

"We are extremely thankful to the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the Army Corps of Engineers, and others who are working even through the holiday season to ensure that the students have sufficient classroom space on our campus to continue our semester here," said Eliptico. He noted in a previous interview that the As Terlaje campus is being prepared for the installation of temporary classrooms.

A total of 24 temporary classrooms would be set up.

"Although we'll be in temporary structures, it'll be great to have our students back in As Terlaje," Eliptico said.

The college's spring semester classes will begin in the first week of April. However, registration for that semester will begin in February.

A more detailed calendar is available on the NMC website, https://www.marianas.edu/.

Man'amko Center reopens

By ERWIN ENCINARES
erwin_encinares@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The Man'amko Center, or the Saipan Office on Aging Center in Garapan opened its doors to the elderly yesterday, attracting about 60 on its first day.

Executive director Walter Manglona said this was the first time for the center to accommodate the elderly since the devastation of Super Typhoon Yutu, when the center was temporarily used as an emergency short-term shelter.

Despite the center's low-key reopening, about 60 of the center's 80 *man'amko* members still showed up as of 12pm yesterday.

Manglona said that some members asked to be picked up on Monday. "Some of them are still doing errands," he added.

Manglona said his office is looking at talking with the *man'amko* the idea of a late holiday celebration since the *man'amko* were unable to meet over the holidays.

"We are anticipating next week…to sit down and plan what we can do to celebrate the new year and the typhoon recovery," he said. "[Today] seemed like a soft opening."

Manglona noted that the shelterees left the center about two to three weeks ago.

"…We still [have] quite a few things to do, but the [Aging Office] is looking pretty good now, so we decided to open up the center," Manglona said.

"We miss our *man'amko* and we want them to come back. [Reopening] the Aging Office is very helpful for them to recover, not just from the disaster but also mentally and physically…by getting them back to normalcy," he added.

Happy New Year CNMI!
We're happy to inform you that McDonald's Middle Road is back to its regular business hours of operation.
Open from 6:30am to 10:00pm DAILY.
Come visit us soon!
McDonald's

Northern Marianas College
Fall 2018 & Spring 2019
Updated December 21, 2018
CALENDAR
Fall 2018
Afternoon, Evening, and Saturday Classes ONLY (at SSHS)
Dates | Adjusted Schedule
Dec. 03 - 08 | Week One
Dec. 10 - 15 | Week Two
Dec. 17 - Jan. 05 | Holiday Break
Jan. 07 - 12 | Week Three
Jan. 14 – 19 | Week Four
Jan. 17 | Cash for College – Tinian (Tentative)*
Jan. 19 | Cash for College - Saipan (Tentative)*
Jan. 21 | Holiday – MLK Jr. Day
Jan. 22 – 26 | Week Five
Jan. 24 - 25 | Cash for College - Rota (Tentative)*
Jan. 28 – Feb. 02 | Week Six – Last Week of Instruction
Feb. 04 – 09 | Final Exam Week
Feb. 11 – 16 | Grades Due
Fall 2018
Morning (AM), Online, and HYBRID classes (at NMC As Terlaje Campus)*
Dates | Adjusted Schedule
Feb. 11 - 16 | Week One
Feb. 18 | Holiday – President's Day
Feb. 19 - 22 | Week Two
Feb. 25 - Mar. 02 | Week Three
Mar. 04 - 09 | Week Four
Mar. 11 - 16 | Week Five - Last Week of Instruction
Mar. 18 - 23 | Final Exam Week
Mar. 25 | Holiday - Commonwealth Covenant Day
Mar. 26 - 27 | Grades Due
*Dates above are all in 2019. Additional minutes added to each course section
Spring 2019
All Classes (at NMC As Terlaje Campus)**
Dates | Adjusted Schedule
Feb. 11 - 16 | Early Academic Advising / Priority Registration for Spring 2019 Anticipated Graduates
Feb. 19 - Mar 23 | Registration for All Students
Mar 28 - 30 | Late Advising & Registration
Apr. 01 - 06 | Week One - First Week of Instruction
Apr. 08 - 20 | Weeks Two and Three
Apr. 18 - 20 | Spring Break
Apr. 22 - June 08 | Weeks Four to Ten
May 27 | Holiday – Memorial Day
June 10 – 15 | Week Eleven - Last Week of instruction
June 17 - 22 | Final Exam Week
June 24 | Grades Due for Potential Graduates
June 25 - 26 | Grades Due for All Students
June 29 | NMC Commencement Ceremony
**Additional minutes added to each course section
PLEASE NOTE: The Academic Calendars and Course Schedules are subject to change, depending on availability of space and other factors. Every possible effort will be made to ensure communication of information to all students and other stakeholders.
Northern Marianas College

Russian's lawsuit vs DHS is stayed

By FERDIE DE LA TORRE
ferdie_delatorre@saipantribune.com
REPORTER

The federal court has granted the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's motion to stay the proceedings in a lawsuit filed by a Russian national against DHS in light of the federal government shutdown.

In an order on Monday, U.S. District Court for the NMI Chief Judge Ramona V. Manglona said the lawyer for DHS will notify the court as soon as Congress has appropriated funds for the Department of Justice, so it could resume operations.

"Upon receiving notice from the United States, all current deadlines for the parties shall be extended commensurate with the duration of the lapse in appropriations," said Manglona in staying the proceedings in Milan Fargo's case.

Fargo is suing DHS to compel it to issue him certain immigration documents.

The appropriations act that had been funding DOJ expired and appropriations to DOJ lapsed at the end of the day on Dec. 21, 2018.

In DHS' motion to stay proceedings, assistant U.S. attorney Jessica F. Wessling said the department does not know when funding will be restored by Congress.

Wessling said the Anti-Deficiency Act provides that "in the absence of appropriated funds, no obligation can be incurred except for the protection of life and property [and] the orderly suspension of operations."

She said that, without an appropriation, DOJ attorneys and employees of the federal DHS are prohibited from working, even on a voluntary basis, except in very limited circumstances, including "emergencies involving the safety of human life or the protection of property."

Wessling requested a stay of all proceedings in Fargo's case until Congress has restored appropriations to DOJ, including deadlines and hearings.

According to court records, the 65-year-old Fargo, whose original name is Nassir Nazarovich Kourbanov, is suing DHS to compel it to issue him immigration documents, including some documents from his alien file pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act.

Fargo is on removal proceedings since September 2016 and has been released on his own recognizance.

Some of Jonabel Rumley's 4th grade students gather for a photo with a geography project that they had integrated with Achieve3000's interdisciplinary literacy program. Rumley's class was recently recognized for winning Achieve3000's Read to Succeed contest.
CONTRIBUTED PHOTO

MCS 4th graders win Achieve3000 'Read to Succeed' contest

Achieve3000 recently announced that Mount Carmel School's 4th grade students under their teacher, Jonabel Rumley, won the "Read to Succeed" contest sponsored by Achieve3000.

The contest, which ran from early November through December 2018, was held to encourage students to succeed in Achieve3000's online lessons designed to promote interdisciplinary literacy.

Every time a student in the class completed a multiple-choice activity, that student's class earned one point. For every score of 75 percent or higher, the class earned two points, and for every score of 88 percent or higher, the class earned three points.

Rumley's students topped the contest with a record-breaking 54,025 points, for which they were awarded a class party sponsored by Achieve3000.

School president Galvin Deleon Guerrero expressed how proud he was of Rumley and her students. "Even with all the challenges brought by Super Typhoon Yutu, such as lack of power and limited internet connectivity, our students committed to doing their best. In the end, they emerged as the best!"

The achievement was significant enough to garner the attention of Achieve3000's chief executive officer, Stuard Udell. In his message to Deleon Guerrero, Udell wrote, "We truly appreciate the opportunity to partner with you in impacting student achievement." Udell said. "I personally value your support and look forward to continued student growth in 2019." ***(PR)***

Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality
Division of Coastal Resources Management
P.O. Box 501304, Saipan, MP 96950
Tel.: (670) 664-8300; Fax: (670) 664-8315
www.dcrm.gov.mp

Eli D. Cabrera
Administrator

Janice E. Castro
Director, DCRM

PUBLIC NOTICE

From the COMMONWEALTH OF THE NOTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS COASTAL MANAGEMENT PROGRAM of the CNMI'S DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

DATE: January 4, 2019

NOTICE: The Bureau of Environmental and Coastal Quality (BECQ) Division of Coastal Resource Management (DCRM) is currently reviewing a federal consistency determination from the Department of the Navy regarding a proposed rulemaking activity. Developed in consultation with the US Environmental Protection Agency, the Proposed Rule, *Uniform National Discharge Standards (UNDS) for Vessels of the Armed Forces – Phase II Batch Two*, establishes performance standards to regulate incidental discharges occurring from the normal operation of vessels of the Armed Forces. More information on the Proposed Rule (81 FR 69753) and the full text of the National Consistency Determination under review are available at https://www.epa.gov/vessels-marinas-and-ports/unds-phase-ii-batch-two-national-consistency-determination.

Federal consistency is a provision of the Coastal Zone Management Act (CZMA) that requires federal actions that affect the coastal zone to be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of a coastal state's federally approved coastal management plan.

Comments on whether the project is consistent with the enforceable policies of the CNMI's coastal management program can be submitted to the Division of Coastal Resource Management at FedCon@dcrm.gov.mp.

This public notice has been published for compliance with 15 CFR § 930.42. DCRM is soliciting public comments for seven (8) days, starting on January 4, 2019 and ending on January 11, 2019. We welcome your feedback and thank you for your consideration.

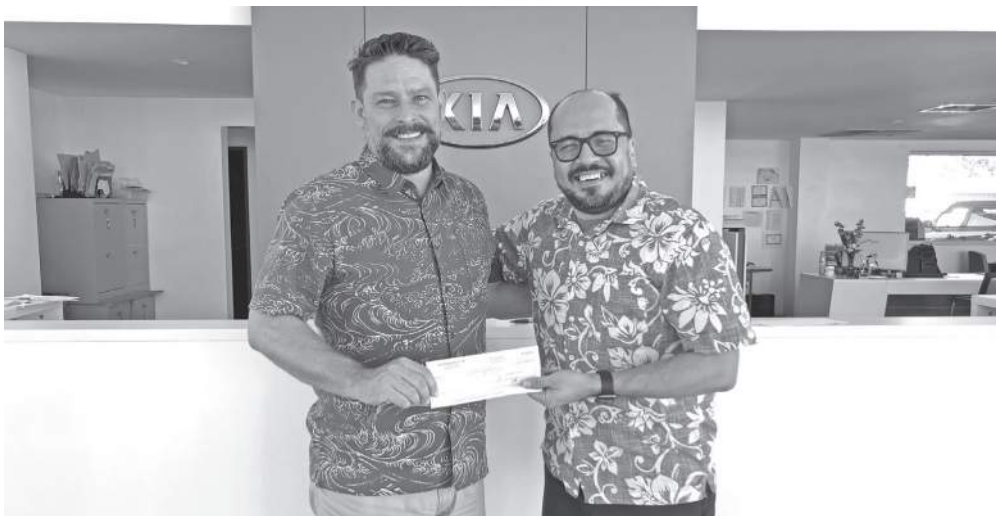
Commonwealth Cancer Association
AWARENESS•EDUCATION•HOPE

2019 CCA Board of Directors & GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING NOTICE

The Commonwealth Cancer Association is inviting the community, cancer survivors, friends, and supporters to its annual general membership meeting on Thursday, January 17, 2019 at 5:30 PM at the CCA conference room in Gualo Rai.

The agenda will include the president's 2018 annual report as well as the treasurer's financial report. Immediately after the representations, election of four (4) board members will commence. Nominations for board members will be accepted in advance via email and/or on the floor.

To submit a board nomination, or more information contact CCA at 682-0050 or email at ccamarianas@gmail.com



'TIS THE SEASON FOR GIVING

Right before the Christmas break, Joeten Motors and Mobil Kagman made education tax credit contributions to Mount Carmel School. for Joeten Motors general manager Matt Deets, left, presents his company's ETC contribution to school president Galvin Deleon Guerrero. On behalf of Mobil Kagman, Jovie Flores, second from left, and Maggie Kaipat, second from right, presented the ETC contribution to Deleon Guerrero, far left, and vice principal Barbara Merfalen, far right, along with Knights Cassidee, front left, and Oliveeah, front right. The school expressed its appreciation to the donors, assuring them that their contributions will fund ongoing repair and typhoon recovery efforts.

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS

CUC lowers fuel charge in Jan. due to falling gas prices

The Commonwealth Utilities Corp. has lowered its fuel adjustment charge for January, primarily due to falling gas prices worldwide.

In a notice yesterday, CUC said that it has been notified by Mobil Oil Mariana Islands, Inc. that there has been a decrease in the average international fuel prices.

As a result, the current FAC rate of $0.21246 per kWh has decreased to $0.17624 per kWh effective Jan. 1, 2019.

Residential customers who use 500 kWh of power per month will pay approximately $18.11 less in their monthly billing.

The FAC is one of two components that make up the CUC electric kWh rate, which is used to purchase fuel. The second component is the CUC base rate, which is used to fund operations, projects, and debt service. This base rate has not been increased since April 17, 2014.

CUC is required, pursuant to an order previously issued by the Commonwealth Public Utilities Commission, to adjust (up or down) the FAC pass-through rate when the Mean of Platts Singapore monthly pricing equals or exceeds a 4.5 percent differential of the average per gallon cost of fuel used in the calculation of the current FAC rate.

CUC first instituted the LEAC, or levelized energy adjustment clause, in 2009 to recover fuel and fuel related costs, a system also used by power providers in Guam and the Virgin Islands. In May 2015, the CPUC authorized CUC to change the name of LEAC to FAC to provide customers a more accurate description of the electric rate. ***(PR)***

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The most common identification of a leak is SMELL.
If you smell gas, there is a possibility of a fire or explosion.
If the odor is STRONG:
1. Shut off gas if possible
2. DO NOT light matches or cigarettes
3. DO NOT operate switches or electrical appliances
4. Get everyone out of the building
5. Call the Fire Department from a neighbor's phone
6. Call Wushin LPGas Emergency Number

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Raffle Draw on February 4 2019 at 10 a.m.. Some restrictions may apply.
IDEAL SIGNS

KZMI counts down Asia's top 140 songs in 2018

Beginning tomorrow, Jan. 5, and throughout January, radio station KZMI 103.9 FM will feature the region's first and only syndicated radio chart countdown program, Asia Pop40, once again counting down the most popular 140 songs from 2018, over four weekly episodes.

This year marks the fifth annual countdown of the top 140 songs on the Asia Pop40 chart, based on their ranking in the chart and the number of weeks they appeared.

This year's countdown will be presented each week by guest hosts from AP40's affiliate stations as well as Asia Pop40 China's host, Max Lim.

Rob Graham, the creator & executive producer of Asia Pop40, said: "We're very excited to present our yearend highlight package of Asia Pop40 again this year. What better way to showcase 52 episodes, or 156 hours, of programming? Our annual countdown was a first for Asian radio and we're very proud of that."

As in previous years, the countdown will also honor the Asia Pop40's No. 1 song of 2018, the Asia Pop40 artist of 2018, and the Asia Pop40 group/duo of 2018, Graham said.

The Asia Pop 140 countdown programs will air throughout January, culminating with the announcement of the No.1 song of 2018 on Saturday Jan. 26, 2019.

STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

The *Asia Pop 140* chart of 2018 consists of:

- 62 collaborations
- 27 tracks from solo female artists
- 58 tracks from solo male artists
- 28 tracks from groups
- 15 songs from movie soundtracks
- 85 tracks from the Americas
- 7 tracks from Australia/New Zealand
- 15 tracks from Europe
- 33 tracks from the United Kingdom
- 10 tracks from Asia

Asia Pop40 is the first regional weekly chart countdown radio show produced in Asia specifically for Asian radio, now heard in over 100 markets across Asia-Pacific and the Middle-East in English and Mandarin.

Asia Pop40 is produced and syndicated by EON Syndicated Media, based in Singapore.

Asia Pop40 is three hours in length and apart from showcasing the latest music, also features latest movie reviews, albums reviews, artist interviews and massive competitions. Asia Pop40 can be heard exclusively every Saturday on KZMI 103.9 from 11am to 2pm. "We are proud to be part of the Asia Pop 40 network of stations. Asia Pop 40 is an ideal fit for Saipan as the program is relatable not only to our local audience but also to the 500,000 Asian visitors the CNMI receives annually. Plus, we have several sponsors like IT&E and World Tour and Travel who use Asia Pop 40 as an effective vehicle to directly target our affluent Asian market in Saipan," according to general manager Bob Webb. ***(PR)***

Xile Lyu on President's List at BJU

GREENVILLE, SC— Xile Lyu, a freshman Elementary Education major from Saipan, was among approximately 550 Bob Jones University students named to the fall 2018 President's List. The President's List recognizes students who earn a 3.75 or higher grade point average for the semester.

Located in Greenville, South Carolina, Bob Jones University provides an outstanding regionally accredited Christian liberal arts education purposely designed to inspire a lifelong pursuit of learning, loving and leading.

BJU offers over 100 undergraduate and graduate programs in religion, education, fine arts and communication, arts and science, health sciences, and business.

BJU has nearly 3,000 students from nearly every state and more than 40 countries. We are committed to the truth of Scripture and to pursuing excellence in all we do. ***(PR)***

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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Phone: (670) 237-6500/1 • Fax (670) 234-5962
E-mail Address: cpa.admin@pticom.com • Website: www.cpa.gov.mp

AMENDED NOTICE

Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-002-19
Request for Proposals
for:
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-01
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-02
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-03
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-04
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-05
CPA Concession No. CRS-2018-06

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of six (6) concessions granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport ("Car Rental Concessions"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport for a period of three years upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-002-19 is **December 05, 2018,** and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:30 p.m. on January, 22 2019**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00 (cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

COMMONWEALTH PORTS AUTHORITY
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AMENDED NOTICE

Tinian International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-003-19
Request for Proposals
for:
CPA Concession No. CRT-2018-07
CPA Concession No. CRT-2018-08
CPA Concession No. CRT-2018-09

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of three (3) concessions granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Tinian International Airport ("Car Rental Concessions"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Tinian International Airport for a period of three years upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-003-19 is **December 05, 2018,** and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:30 p.m. on January 22, 2019**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00 (cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

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INVITATION FOR BID

(This ad is paid for by NMHC with HUD funds.)

BID SUBMISSION DATE: Tuesday, February 05, 2019 • TIME: 10:00 AM

NMHC IFB 2019-003
Building Maintenance of Housing Units in Rota

Proposal packets will be available on January 04, 2019, at the NMHC Central Office in Garapan, Saipan or at the Rota Field Office, during regular working hours (7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.) Monday thru Friday except CNMI holidays.

The provisions of the CNMI Procurement regulations, NMIAC 70-30.3-725 AND 70-30.3-730 Prohibiting Gratuities, Kickbacks and Contingent Fees shall apply.

A Mandatory Pre-Bid conference will be held at 10:00 a.m. on January 11, 2019, at the NMHC Rota Field Office in Songsong Village.

For more information, contact Mr. Jacob Muna, Acting Office Manager, at (670)234-6866/7689 during regular business hours, 7:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday, except CNMI holidays.

/s/ **Aubry Hocog**
Chairwoman, NMHC Board of Directors

/s/ **Herman S. Sablan, Director**
Division of Procurement & Supply

NOTICE OF APPLICATION
DIVISION OF COASTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT

P. O. Box 501304, Saipan MP 96950, Gualo Rai Center, Saipan
TEL. NO. 664-8300 FAX NO. 664-8315

As of January 04, 2019
NOTICE OF APPLICATION

THE FOLLOWING IS A PUBLIC ANNOUNCEMENT OF COASTAL PERMIT APPLICATIONS RECEIVED BY THE DCRM OFFICE:

APPLICANT	DATE APPLICATION RECEIVED	APPLICATION PROJECT DESCRIPTION	LOCATION	TYPE	STATUS
1. American Sinopan, LLC	12/28/2018 SWm-2019-X-010	Temporary water & sewer connection	Tanapag, Saipan	Minor Construction New	Under Review*
2. New Century Hotel, LLC	10/02/2018 SMS-2019-X-001	Hotel	Tanapag, Saipan	Major Siting	Approved 12/27/2018*
3. USA Fanter Corp. Ltd.	10/18/2018 SMS-2019-X-003	Hotel	Garapan, Saipan	Major Siting	Approved 12/27/2018*

NMIAC §15-10-210 of the CRM Rules and Regulations requires all permit applications to be published in a newspaper for general circulation within the CNMI within 15 days of receipt of application. The list reflects recently received permit applications and those with a recent change in status. New applications are marked with an asterisk (*).

The Public is invited to submit written comments regarding any of the above projects for which a permit decision has not been issued. All permit comments should identify the project by application number. Your comments should be mailed or hand-delivered to the DCRM Office. All persons who desire a public hearing regarding any project may do so by submitting a written request for a public hearing to the DCRM Office within fourteen (14) days for minor permits (APCs) and proposed amended major sitings. Public Hearings are required for all new major siting projects. All public hearing notices are published in a local newspaper of general circulation. Residents of Rota and Tinian may submit comments and hearing requests to their local DCRM Coordinator. Persons wishing to retain the right to appeal a DCRM Permit decision must file a notice of appeal with the DCRM office within thirty (30) days of the issuance of the DCRM permit decision as provided in Part 200 § 15-10-235 of the DCRM Regulations.

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AMENDED NOTICE

Benjamin Taisacan Manglona/Rota International Airport
"Car Rental Concessions"
CPA-RFP-004-19
Request for Proposals
for:
CPA Concession No. CRR-2018-10
CPA Concession No. CRR-2018-11
CPA Concession No. CRR-2018-12

The Commonwealth Ports Authority ("CPA" or "Authority") is soliciting proposals for the award of three (3) concessions granting the privilege to provide motor vehicle rental services to the traveling public (including the provision of insurance related to motor vehicles rented in the operation of such motor vehicle rental services) at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona/Rota International Airport ("Car Rental Concessions"). The successful proposer will be expected to provide motor vehicle rental services in accordance with its concession and concession agreement at the Benjamin Taisacan Manglona/Rota International Airport for a period of three years upon entering into a concession agreement with the Authority.

The date of issuance of CPA-RFP-004-19 is **December 05, 2018,** and it can be obtained at the issuing office: CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950, Second floor of Arrival terminal at the Saipan International Airport.

Proposals must be addressed to Commonwealth Ports Authority, Attn: Car Rental Concessions Evaluation Committee, CPA Administration Office, Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport, P.O. Box 501055, Saipan, MP 96950; and submitted to and received by the CPA Administration Office (second floor of arrival terminal at the Francisco C. Ada/Saipan International Airport) **by or before 4:30 p.m. on January 22, 2019**, at which time the proposal period shall expire. Proposals must be accompanied with a non-refundable administrative fee of $200.00 (cashier's checks made out to Commonwealth Ports Authority) to defray the costs associated with handling and considering the proposal. Proposals are not required to include a prepaid minimum concession fee.

The Commonwealth Ports Authority reserves the right to cancel this RFP and to reject any and all proposals in accordance with its Concession Regulations (NMIAC Chapter 40-70).

CHRISTOPHER S. TENORIO
Executive Director

Coast Guard suspends search for missing crew

HONOLULU—The U.S. Coast Guard has suspended last Wednesday the search for the remaining unaccounted-for crewmember of the *Sincerity Ace*.

"Following the conclusion of morning and afternoon searches by our aircraft and commercial vessels we suspended the active search. This is always a difficult decision and takes many factors into account," said chief petty officer Dennis Vetrano, with Coast Guard Joint Rescue Coordination Center Honolulu. "We extend our condolences to the families and loved ones of the crewmembers affected by this tragedy."

Good Samaritans from four merchant vessels were able to rescue 16 of the 21 *Sincerity Ace* crew who abandoned ship following a fire, Monday. Four missing mariners were located but remain in the water as they were unresponsive and unable to react to lifesaving equipment. Coast Guard watchstanders issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast Notice to Mariners requesting vessels transiting the area to keep a sharp lookout for the remaining unaccounted-for crewmember. Searches were conducted throughout the day Wednesday by a Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules aircrew and the crews of the motor vessels *Venus Spirit* and *Genco Augustus*.

The *Sincerity Ace*'s managing company, Shoei Kisen Kaisha Ltd., is coordinating with the merchant vessels for the transport of the surviving crew from the vessels' next ports of call. The company will make attempts to recover the four unresponsive crewmembers still in the water when other contracted ships arrive on the scene in several days. Commercial tugs were dispatched to the *Sincerity Ace* earlier in the week. The vessel remains uncrewed and adrift. At last report, it was listing to starboard and still on fire. The cause of the fire and the disposition of the cargo remain unknown.

The Coast Guard, Navy, and good Samaritans aboard five merchant vessels conducted a total of 13 searches covering 5,544 nautical square miles (7,342 statute miles) over a span of three days.

Involved in the searches were two Air Station Barbers Point HC-130 Hercules aircrews, a Navy 7th Fleet P-8 Poseidon aircrew, crew of the motor vessel *Green Lake*, crew of the *SM Eagle*, crew of the motor vessel *New Century 1*, crew of the motor vessel *Venus Spirit*, and crew of the motor vessel *Genco Augustus*.

"We are very grateful for the assistance the crews of these vessels have given during the search and rescue efforts," said Vetrano. "These crewmembers went out of their way to aid their fellow mariners, and because of the remoteness of the incident the outcome may have been very different had they not responded."

JRCC Honolulu received the initial notification from JRCC Japan at 1:04am, Monday, of the situation. Watchstanders in Honolulu immediately issued a SafetyNet broadcast requesting the assistance of vessels in the area and directed the launch of the Hercules aircrews from Air Station Barbers Point. The master of the *Sincerity Ace* reported a significant vessel fire, ongoing firefighting efforts, and an intent to abandon ship.

Coast Guard 14th District watchstanders coordinated the rescue efforts with good Samaritans on the responding merchant vessels and the Coast Guard and Navy aircrews throughout the operation.

The commercial vessels involved are part of the AMVER, or Automated Mutual-Assistance Vessel Rescue System, a worldwide voluntary reporting system sponsored by the United States Coast Guard. It is a computer-based global ship reporting system used worldwide by search and rescue authorities to arrange for assistance to persons in distress at sea. ***(USCG)***

Civics contest focuses on 4th Amendment in 21st Century

SAN FRANCISCO—The 2019 Ninth Circuit Civics Contest offers high school students in the western United States and Pacific islands an opportunity to win cash prizes while learning about the role of the judicial branch in preserving our constitutional rights.

The theme of the contest is "The 4th Amendment in the 21st Century: What is an 'Unreasonable Search and Seizure' in the Digital Age?"

Students are challenged to write an essay or produce a short video focusing on how the federal courts have applied 4th Amendment protections to electronic data devices, particularly the cellphones upon which almost everyone relies.

The contest is open to young people in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, the U.S. territory of Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

Students in grades 9-12 in public, private, parochial and charter schools, and homeschooled students of equivalent grade status are invited to participate.

The contest is organized by the Courts and Community Committee of the Judicial Council of the Ninth Circuit and sponsored by Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals and the federal district and bankruptcy courts in the15 judicial districts that make up the circuit.

A total of $7,000 in cash prizes will be awarded. The top three finishers in both the essay and video competitions will receive $2,000 for 1st place, $1,000 for 2nd place and $500 for 3rd place. The 1st-place winners along with a parent or guardian also will be invited to the 2019 Ninth Circuit Judicial Conference in Spokane, Washington.

Many students also have a chance to win cash prizes in local competitions being sponsored by the individual judicial districts to select finalists for the circuit-wide contest.

Contest rules and other information are available now on the contest website: https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest/. Entries will be accepted beginning February 1, 2019. The deadline for entries is 11:59pm Pacific Time on April 1, 2019. Finalists will be announced in May and the winners in June.

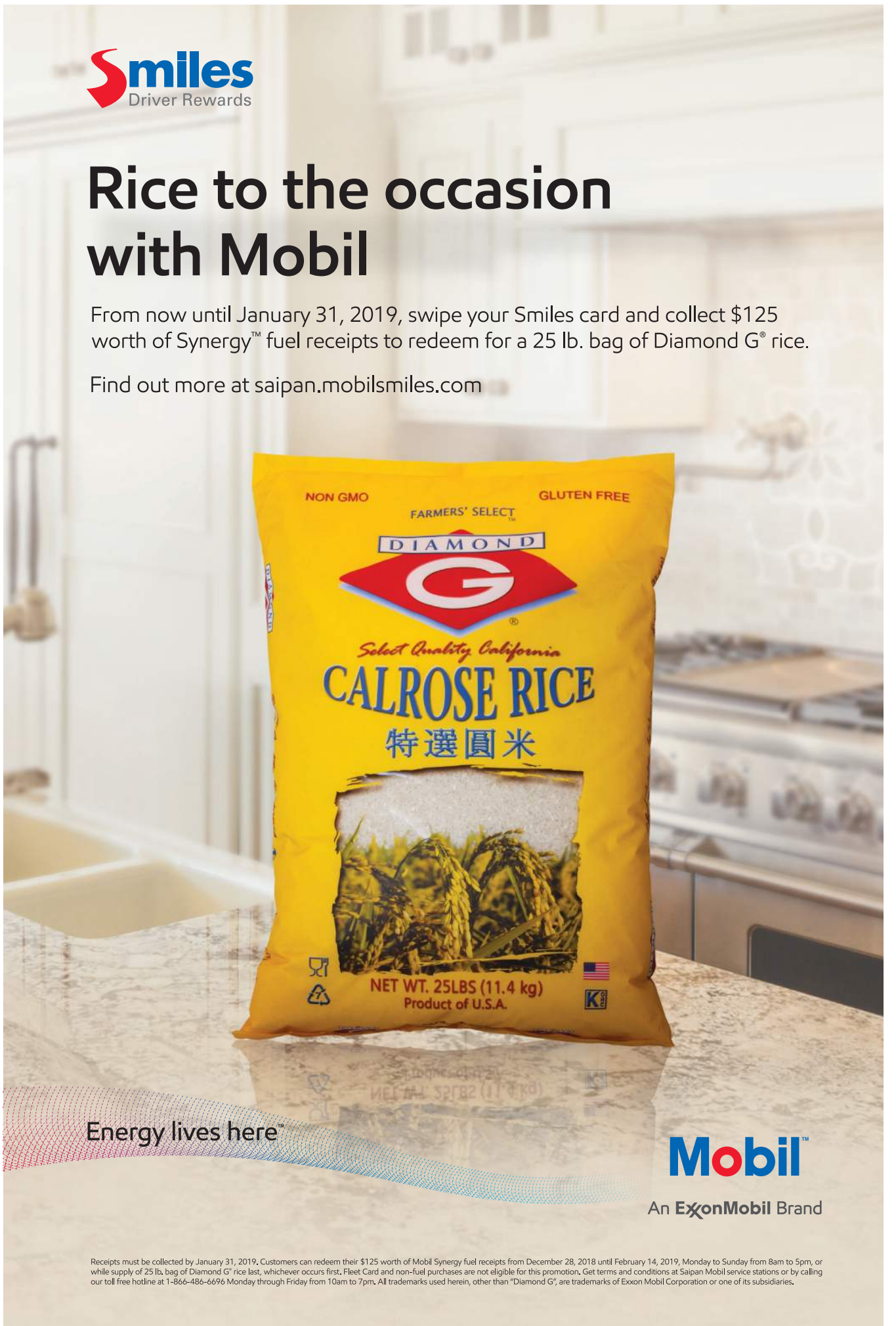
For more information about the Ninth Circuit Civics Contest, contact the Ninth Circuit Office of the Circuit Executive, civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov/(415) 355-8873. ***(PR)***

CHamoru commission meetings, work session

The Kumisión i Fino' CHamoru yan i Fina'nå'guen i Historia yan i Lina'la' i Taotao Tåno'(Commission on CHamoru Language and the Teaching of the History and Culture of the Indigenous People) will hold its regular monthly meetings on Thursday, Jan. 10, from 12:30pm to 3pm at the Garden House in Hagåtña, and on Friday, Jan. 25, from 4:30pm to 6:30pm at a venue to be announced.

Work session will also be held on Thursday, Jan. 17, 12:30pm to 3pm at the Garden House in Hagåtña to finalize plans for 3rd CHamoru Orthography Workshop and Training that will take place on on Jan. 25, from 8am to 4:30pm at a venue to be announced.

For more information, contact kumisión chair/Gé'helo' Hope Alvarez Cristobal at 483-0097 or secretary/Sikritåria Rosa Salas Palomo at 727-5522. ***(PR)***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Receipts must be collected by January 31, 2019. Customers can redeem their $125 worth of Mobil Synergy fuel receipts from December 28, 2018 until February 14, 2019, Monday to Sunday from 8am to 5pm, or while supply of 25 lb. bag of Diamond G® rice last, whichever occurs first. Fleet Card and non-fuel purchases are not eligible for this promotion. Get terms and conditions at Saipan Mobil service stations or by calling our toll free hotline at 1-866-486-6696 Monday through Friday from 10am to 7pm. All trademarks used herein, other than "Diamond G", are trademarks of Exxon Mobil Corporation or one of its subsidiaries.

Opinion

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EDITORIAL

Measles outbreaks should be a wake-up call

Public health officials in New York and New Jersey are fighting a measles outbreak that has sickened dozens of people since November, most of them unvaccinated members of orthodox Jewish communities. The virus was traced to travelers from Israel, which is dealing with its own measles outbreak at the moment

So far, the outbreak has been relatively small because, despite gaps in what's known as community immunity, the overall national vaccination remains high enough to prevent wide-scale epidemics such as the one that raged through parts of Europe this year. But Americans should be alarmed, nevertheless. The next measles outbreak— and there will be one— could be much worse.

That's because immunization rates among U.S. school-aged children are— incredibly— declining in certain states, thanks to unreasonably permissive immunization rules. All but three U.S. states allow parents to opt out of vaccination requirements on religious grounds, and 18 of them allow exemptions based on what they call personal belief, which is an even less strict standard. That's become a problem in recent years as the gospel of ignorance being pushed by the "anti-vax" movement has gained traction across the country. Many vaccination opponents believe the medicine in vaccinations for measles, mumps, rubella and other real diseases causes autism and various "vaccination injuries." They have no science to back this up, only misinformed anecdotes that serve to scare gullible parents.

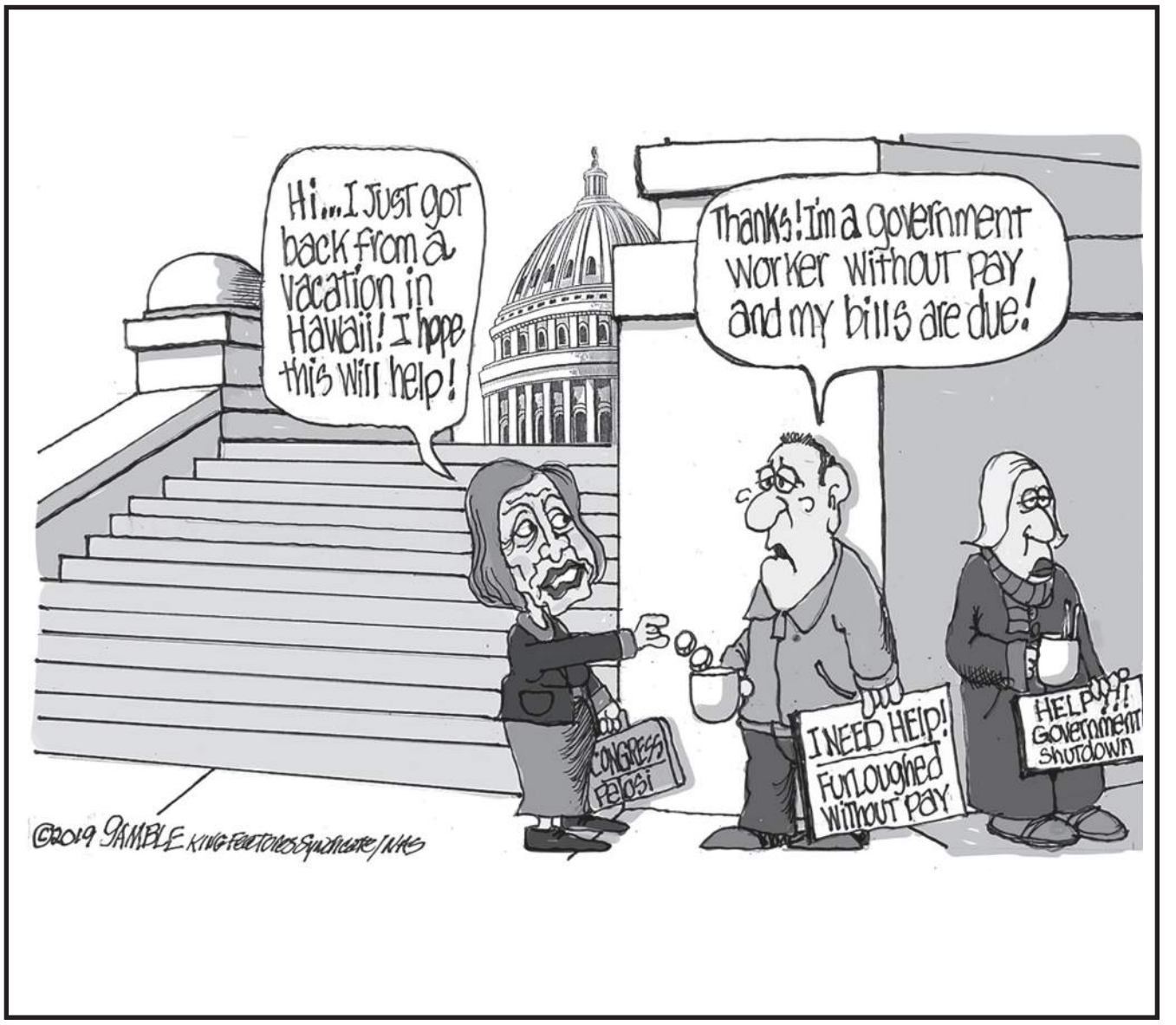
And they're gaining ground. A study published earlier this year found that nonmedical exemptions have been on the rise in 12 of the 18 states that allow personal belief exemptions. The World Health Organization attributes a global spike in measles in the last two years to the spread of misinformation by those opposed to vaccinations.

The opponents of vaccination aren't just pushing bad facts. Organizations such as the National Vaccination Information Center are behind legislative efforts to make it easier for parents to refuse to immunize their children. One example was a proposed bill in New York state that would have barred school officials from asking for supporting information when a parent claims a religious exemption. That bill didn't pass.

It's frustrating that some parents are more concerned about protecting their children from imaginary threats than from a well-documented killer. Measles is nothing to mess around with; it is extremely contagious, in part because sick people can infect others before they realize they are suffering from more than the sniffles. And it can be particularly deadly for unvaccinated adults. Before a vaccination was developed in the 1960s, about 2.6 million people died from measles every year, according to the World Health Organization.

No one has died yet in this particular East Coast outbreak. That's a relief. But it shouldn't take death to wake the public to the fact that the rhetoric behind anti-vaccination arguments has real and terrible consequences.

(c)2018 Los Angeles Times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Prepare for slower growth and greater risks in 2019

By JOHN MANZELLA
Tribune News Service

John Manzella, founder of the ManzellaReport.com, is an author and speaker on global business, emerging risks and economic trends. To contact John, visit www.JohnManzella.com.

2018 likely will be remembered for achieving solid economic growth, a highly volatile stock market, and an emerging trade war with China. In 2019 we can expect slower growth, continued volatility, and China to resist significant market-based reforms. These and other factors, combined with an environment of political uncertainty, could create greater risks.

The U.S. economy is estimated to have grown by 3 percent in 2018. This rate is based on various components, including strong retail and construction sectors, and a real estate market that has slowed due to a housing shortage, rising mortgage rates, and high home prices, which have kept some buyers on the curb. And consumer spending, which represents 70 percent of U.S. output, is reflected in relatively strong, but slightly decreasing consumer confidence, says the Conference Board, a U.S. think tank.

The labor market is another issue that has real impact. The exceptionally low unemployment rate has been good for workers. But it has contributed to a labor and skills deficit that's not good for businesses struggling to find them. Consequently, there are more than 7 million non-farm job openings that have not been filled, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

Many industries, including manufacturing, construction and trucking, are experiencing the largest labor shortages in decades. If companies can't find the employees and skills they need, they can't grow resulting in downward pressure on economic growth.

But one of the biggest factors that will impact the U.S. economy in 2019 is international trade.

Although the changes are minimal and likely to lead to higher priced automobiles, the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, known as USMCA, if passed by Congress essentially resulting in a modified NAFTA, will help to reduce uncertainty and market volatility. And the likelihood that the U.S. and European Union can reach a favorable trade agreement in 2019 will be another step in the right direction.

But trying to get China to comply with all the demands made by President Trump will be unlikely by March 1—the end of the 90-day trade truce agreed to by Trump and Chinese President Xi at the G20 meeting in Buenos Aires on Dec. 1. And here's why.

For decades, China has been subsidizing its state-owned enterprises thereby giving then an unfair competitive advantage, pressuring U.S. companies to hand over technology in exchange for market access, and placing market restrictions on U.S. companies. In addition, enforcement of Chinese intellectual property protection laws have been weak resulting in lost profits for American firms.

To adequately address many of these concerns, as well as achieve higher levels of sustainable economic growth, China needs to press ahead with many market-based economic reforms it agreed to implement when it joined the World Trade Organization in December 2001. But the speed at which this might occur, if at all, could have positive or negative consequences.

For example, Beijing should eliminate subsidies from its 100,000 state-owned enterprises, many of which underperform and put a drag on its economy. But to do so too quickly could cause unemployment and social unrest to rise—something feared by the ruling Communist party. On the other hand, reforms initiated slowly that in the long run would alleviate trade tensions may not satisfy the White House timetable.

How Trump perceives China's offer in March and presents it to his base will determine if it is a win for the administration or a reason to ratchet up the trade war that could turn into a cold war. And the latter would generate greater uncertainty and volatility—the enemy of prosperity. In turn, American investors and consumers would be inclined to spend less putting downward pressure on U.S. economic growth.

The Federal Reserve and The Wall Street Journal's Economic Forecasting Survey predict the U.S. growth rate will decline to 2.3 percent in 2019. This is based on metrics we can see and analyze.

But it's the direction of U.S.-China trade and relations, political uncertainty, volatility in the stock market, or a combination of factors that could create new risks affecting the economy. As a result, 2019 will require American consumers, households, businesses and investors to operate very cautiously.

EDITORIAL POLICY Letters to the editor must include the NAME, VILLAGE ADDRESS, and CONTACT NUMBER of the contributor. Letters that do not have these information will immediately be trashed. Contributions consisting of 500 words or less have more chances of getting published. The *Saipan Tribune* reserves the right to publish a contribution or not; the right to edit submissions for length, accuracy, and clarity; and the right to publish and distribute contributions in print, electronic, or other media formats. Submissions may be sent via snail mail to the 2nd Floor, JP Center, Beach Road, Garapan, Saipan, 96950; fax (670) 235-3740; e-mail to editor@saipantribune.com; or through our website at www.saipantribune.com.

Driving into 2019

By ED STEPHENS JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Visit Ed Stephens Jr. at EdStephensJr.com. His column runs every Friday.

If you're looking for a sense of what the industrialized nations are up to, automotive production data is always worth a glance. Saipan's primary tourism markets have always been nations with strong car production: China, South Korea, and Japan.

So let's talk cars. Who's making them? Who's driving them? How much are we paying for them? How long do they last?

Going with 2017 data from the International Association of Motor Vehicle Manufacturers, China was, by far, the most prolific producer of motor vehicles.

Of the 97.3 million vehicles produced globally, 29 million were made in China.

A distant second to China was the U.S. at 11.2 million vehicles. Japan was in third place at 9.7 million.

These top three producers jointly accounted for 51 percent of the world's motor vehicle production. Incidentally, they're also the world's largest economies (U.S. is still No. 1; China is No. 2 and rising fast; and Japan is No. 3), jointly comprising 45 percent of the world's economic output.

But South Korea, which is far less populous than the others I just mentioned, is no slouch either. This won't surprise you if you're one of the many people I know who drive a Hyundai or a Kia. Come to think of it, I know a retired General Motors engineer who owns two Kias. Anyway, South Korea's production of 4.1 million vehicles was No. 6 globally (behind No. 5 India and No. 4 Germany).

I will note that we're talking about the raw number of motor vehicles produced, not the dollar value of the vehicles. Digging further into this raw unit count, if we limit our scope to just passenger cars, we'll note that there were 73.5 million produced in 2017. In other words, three out of four motor vehicles produced in the world were passenger cars, with the remaining quarter of the world's 97.3 million vehicles being light-duty trucks, buses, heavy trucks, etc.

As of 2015, the world had about 1.3 billion vehicles in use. This amounted to roughly one vehicle for every 5.5 people on Earth.

The U.S., by contrast, famous for car culture, had almost one vehicle per person; well, that's 0.8 vehicles per person if we want to sharpen our pencil. Although the CNMI wasn't broken out in this tally, Guam was, and it tallied 0.7 vehicles per person.

Japan was around 0.6 vehicles per person, as was western Europe; South Korea was 0.4.

Looking towards the other end of the scale, the Philippines had, on an average basis, just one vehicle for every 26 people. And China, despite its prodigious rates of vehicle production, had just one vehicle for every eight people.

Of course, you don't need me to tell you that cars can be an expensive game. Let's look at some U.S. statistics.

Going from January, 2018 figures, the pricing experts at Kelly Blue Book (KBB.com) say the average new car (a category including pickup trucks and SUVs) cost $36,270. That was an increase of 3.9 percent from the prior year. At such a rate of increase we'd see average new car prices exceed $40,000 before the end of next year.

Today's combination of mild gas prices and low interest rates helps sustain high demand for cars and, consequently, it keeps upwards pressure on car prices.

According to Forbes, the average term of a new car loan as of April of last year was 69.2 months (almost six years); the average amount financed was $30,032; and the average monthly payment was $503.

Many people opt for even longer-term loans. Data from other sources says that about one-quarter of car loans are for seven years.

Meanwhile, the longevity of autos has been climbing substantially. According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, the average age of a household automobile in 2017 was 10.1 years, up from just 5.5 years in 1977. Household pickup trucks scored even higher longevity, with 2017 clocking in at 13.1 years on average, up from 1977's average of 7.3 years. This is an intriguing development but I haven't yet puzzled out what's behind it.

Anyway, now that we're caught up with the automotive world I wish you happy motoring, no matter which of the world's 1,282,887,000 vehicles you happen to be driving.

New Year's Resolutions: Forgotten Solutions

LITERARY NOOK

By JOEY 'PEPE BATBON' CONNOLLY
Special to the Saipan Tribune

Joey "Pepe Batbon" Connolly is a retired teacher and has been named a poet laureate of Tinian. He has taught English in CNMI public schools for the past 30 years. He has also taught in Alaska, New Orleans, and Las Vegas.

Every year in January do you make New Year's resolutions
say you'll quit smoking, no white sugar, or lose lots of weight
then by Valentine's Day you have forgotten your solutions
and can't remember which day was that stop smoking date.

You are not alone in all those sincere resolutions gone bad
most people have forgotten their own many times before
then six months later take a look in a mirror and they feel sad
as they smoke their cigarettes or vape outside the back door.

How about saving some paycheck money or being more kind
how and when and where do you save it and what is it for
is it a new car or a vacation trip in the back of your mind
going fishing around another island swimming near its shore.

Generally speaking no matter what you seem to resolve
In time most of those New Year's resolutions will dissolve.

January Acrostic Journey Journal

J - Journeys into the New Year begin
A - Another trip for earth around the sun
N - New arguments, new weight, new belt size
U - Understanding self and others continues
A - A new typhoon breaks all records
R - Resolutions begun are soon forgotten
Y - You can't stop getting a year older

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Hiring contractors for home repair

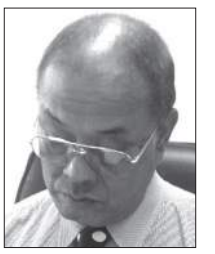
I have been contacting many Saipan contractors and they are not available to accommodate residential repairs. What is the CNMI government proposing for remedy this crisis? Most Saipan businesses hire four to five contractors. I recommend publishing online all Saipan contractors' telephone numbers and email addresses for the public to access and their availability to perform estimates and repairs. Also, it would be best to warn the public to be cautious in selecting contractors.

Roy Ichihara
As Matuis, Saipan

Mandatory shift

By JOHN S. DELROSARIO JR.
Special to the Saipan Tribune

John DelRosario Jr. is a former publisher of the Saipan Tribune *and a former secretary of the Department of Public Lands. All views expressed by the author are his/her own and do not necessarily reflect the opinion and stance of the* Saipan Tribune.



It's a new year and, with relative success in self-government over the last four decades, what's your expectations for the next 40 years? Are you optimistic, pessimistic, guarded, or indifferent?

Obviously, major focus should shift to private industry expansion to cover the increasing cost of services. But even as I advocate it, initial apprehension tells me something's amiss.

For instance, are there still opportunities to do this amidst the decrease of major Nippon investments here in recent past?

Loss: Remember when Nippon investors walked with their luggage to airplanes? Didn't we lose some $7 billion on money that used to be recycled in the local economy? Have we recovered from this? Most importantly, did we learn anything from it?

The loss of $7 billion is a huge amount so vitally instrumental in paying cost of public services here. For all we know, didn't it also force keeping salaries at the poverty income level because there's no money for it? So 15,000 employees had to endure forced hardship because of leadership negligence?

You connect the dots to make sense of the descending implications against the financial posture of the CNMI. Fund scarcity would be on our plate for breakfast, lunch and dinner. How long would this setback last? How would it affect near and long-term services? Would our friends from Japan return?

Deficit: The economic future of the CNMI lies in its ability to expand private industry beyond conventional wisdom. This requires serious discussions among key players. The issue is significant and requires a lot of thoughtful planning.

Successful expansion grants the NMI the ability to create more jobs and generate more revenues. As it is, the cumulative deficit keeps increasing. Reportedly, CHC is in the hole by $26 million and escalating. I'm convinced it isn't overspending as much as underfunding a major service. *Sayu*?

Economy: Moreover, we've braved the term "economy" with justified fear that it is far more complex than meets the eye. This triples in complexity when addressing "island economies" that aren't necessarily endowed with natural resources.

Isn't the latter the greater challenge? Is this why we shove it aside because of its difficulty? Ignoring it doesn't pass ownership to others. It reverts to our front door for resolution, right?

It brings the lack of resolve to the next timely query: How much more U.S. taxpayers' money should be spent here in unearned dues? Self-government simply means living within one's means. Did you get that, pal? Or should I email it to you? This issue is slowly crawling up the front door. Ready for it?

Evidently, what has triggered diminished investments here? Is it in the laws governing investments or is it more adolescent attitude among the elected elite boasting arrogance as a substitute for lack of understanding what investments entails and the requisite fostering of lasting partnership?

Humility: The three inhabited islands here have seaports that allow for the transfer of heavy equipment with relative ease. This isn't the case in most islands in Micronesia or island nations below the equator.

For instance, there was a plan for a major schoolbuilding on one of the outer islands down south. The funding institution was asked to ease on a set deadline in the use of funds. This is because in the entire project would be built strictly from volunteer manpower. The island doesn't have any heavy equipment. Any transfer is null and void because of the lack of seaport facility.

I've been to some of these islands as the NMI representative to the South Pacific community. Beautiful isles with gracious island folks and, though they lack modern facilities (as we know it), I didn't hear anyone clamoring for it either. The sense of contentment with what they have is most humbling.

Heavy: It was 44 years ago when I sailed away from Rongelap and Utirik in the Republic of the Marshalls, quietly praying (as I look ashore to tiny waving hands) knowing many would die of thyroid cancer.

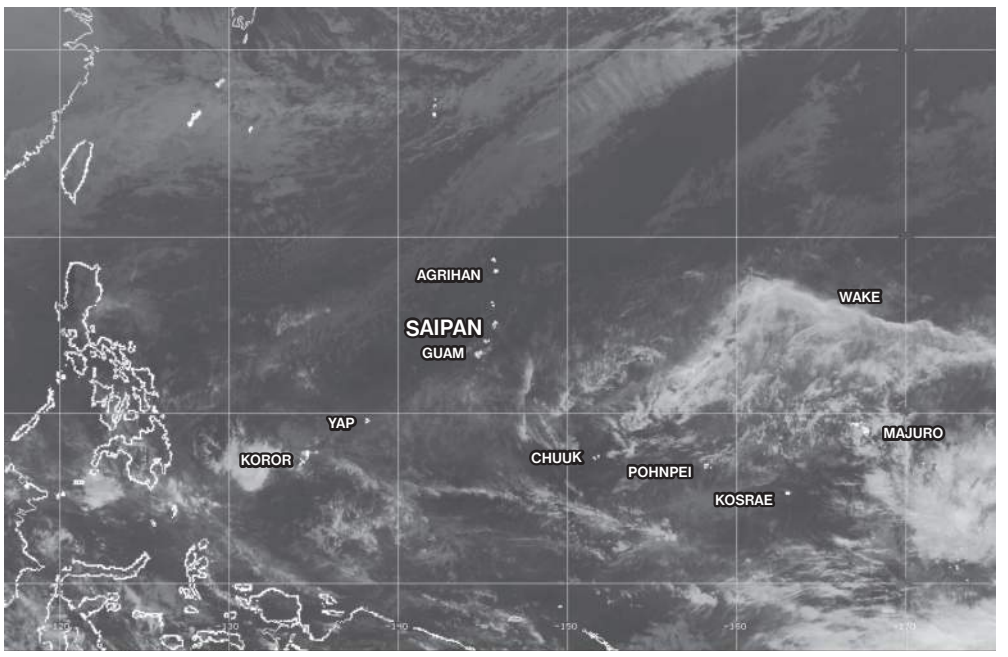
It's an issue embedded in my mind all these years, troubled by the apparent experiment that sacrificed the innocent in the process. I could swallow fatal illnesses from within and around me but not a forced fate upon folks who are as human as anybody else. *Yukwe* and my prayers!

The Weather

5-DAY FORECAST FOR SAIPAN AND TINIAN

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Breezy. Mostly cloudy with scattered showers. Northeast winds 20 to 25 mph.	Breezy. Mostly cloudy. isolated showers.	Breezy. Mostly cloudy. isolated showers.	Breezy. Partly cloudy with isolated light showers.
88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°	88° 77°

YESTERDAY'S SATELLITE IMAGE



PICTURE TIME: 7:20 AM, THURSDAY, JANUARY 3, 2019
Western North Pacific between equator and 25N from 130E to 180.

Partly cloudy skies with isolated light showers through tonight. Clouds and showers will begin to increase Saturday as another shear line approaches the region. Expected scattered showers for Saturday into Sunday, beginning over Saipan, then spreading south as the shear line moves through the region. Mostly cloudy skies will linger a bit longer after the showers decrease on Sunday.

Satellite image and accompanying information are provided by the National Weather Service. For an updated weather forecast, visit the National Weather Service Guam homepage: www.prh.noaa.gov/guam/

MICRONESIA		▲ ▼ °F
Guam and Rota	Showers	84° / 77°
Palau	Thunderstorms	85° / 78°
Yap	Showers	86° / 80°
Chuuk	Thunderstorms	85° / 79°
Pohnpei	Showers	85° / 79°
Kosrae	Showers	85° / 79°
Majuro	Partly Cloudy	85° / 80°

AROUND THE GLOBE		▲ ▼ °F
Auckland	Partly Cloudy	73° / 63°
Beijing	Mostly Cloudy	36° / 16°
Hong Kong	Partly Cloudy	72° / 61°
Honolulu	Mostly Sunny	81° / 72°
London	Mostly Sunny	39° / 30°
Los Angeles	Sunny	67° / 47°
Manila	Sunny	86° / 72°
Melbourne	Showers	72° / 57°
Miami	Mostly Sunny	80° / 71°
New York	Showers	44° / 41°
Osaka	Sunny	52° / 39°
Paris	Partly Cloudy	41° / 30°
Busan	Sunny	45° / 30°
Rome	Sunny	45° / 28°
Salem	Rain	65° / 42°
San Francisco	Sunny	55° / 48°
Seoul	Sunny	34° / 18°
Tokyo	Partly Cloudy	55° / 36°
Washington, DC	Mostly Cloudy	51° / 44°

NMI CRIME STOPPERS
Anonymous tips can now be submitted through the following:
- Call 234-7272 (PARA) on any telephone
- *11 on any IT&E cellular phone
- Log on to the internet at www.nmicrimestoppers.net

TIDES: SAIPAN HARBOR TODAY		FEET
12:42 AM	HIGH TIDE	-0.27
7:47 AM	LOW TIDE	1.77
12:53 PM	HIGH TIDE	1.21
5:48 PM	LOW TIDE	1.91

DAY	SUNRISE	SUNSET
Today	6:43 AM	5:59 PM
Saturday	6:44 AM	5:59 PM
Sunday	6:44 AM	6:00 PM
Monday	6:44 AM	6:01 PM
Tuesday	6:45 AM	6:01 PM

DAY	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONRISE
Today	4:55 AM	4:32 PM	-
Saturday	5:46 AM	5:20 PM	-
Sunday	6:37 AM	6:10 PM	-
Monday	7:25 AM	7:00 PM	-
Tuesday	8:11 AM	7:50 PM	-

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FLIGHT SCHEDULE AS OF DECEMBER 20, 2018

DEPARTURES

SAIPAN-GUAM (GUM)

UA117	9:15am	9:55am	Daily
UA105	4:45pm	5:25pm	2, 4

SAIPAN-BUSAN (PUS)

7C3451	3:15am	6:30am	Daily

SAIPAN-SEOUL (ICN)

OZ626	2:10am	6:00am	1
OZ626	2:50am	6:40am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3401	4:30pm	8:25pm	Daily

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9308	1:10am	4:10am	3, 4
TW308	1:35am	5:20am	Daily
TW9308	3:20am	6:30am	2
TW9308	3:25am	6:30am	5
7C3403	4:35am	8:25am	Daily

SAIPAN-SHANGHAI (PVG)

3U86486	10:10am	8:50am	1, 4, 5, 7

SAIPAN-HANGZHOU (HGH)

JD396	7:30am	11:00am	1
JD396	4:50pm	7:55pm	4

SAIPAN-GUANGZHOU (CAN)

3U8646	4:30am	7:55am	2, 6

SAIPAN-BEIJING (PEK)

MU764	1:30am	6:35am	3, 5, 7

SAIPAN-MANILA (MNL)

UA117/183	9:15am	9:40pm	2, 5 via GUM
UA117/183 via GUM	9:15am	9:50pm	1, 3, 4, 6, 7
UA117/193 GUM-ROR	9:15am	11:50pm	2, 5 via
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:40pm	2 via GUM
UA105/183	4:45pm	9:50pm	4 via GUM

SAIPAN-HONG KONG (HKG)

HX077	1:50am	5:15am	1, 4
OZ626/721	2:10am	11:50am	1 via ICN
OZ626/721	2:50am	11:50am	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 via ICN
UO43	5:45am	8:40am	1, 3, 5, 7
UA117/159	9:15am	11:00pm	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via GUM
UA105/159	4:45pm	11:00pm	2, 4 via GUM

ARRIVALS

GUAM (GUM)-SAIPAN

UA174	7:30am	8:11am	Daily
UA104	3:00pm	3:41pm	2, 4

BUSAN (PUS)-SAIPAN

7C3452	9:35pm	2:00am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
7C3452	10:05pm	2:00am+1	1

SEOUL (ICN)-SAIPAN

7C3402	10:10am	3:30pm	Daily
OZ625	7:40pm	1:00am+1	7
OZ625	8:20pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6

TEMPORARILY SUSPENDED:

TW9307	6:30pm	12:10am+1	2, 3
TW307	7:00pm	12:35am+1	2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7
TW307	7:05pm	12:35am+1	1
TW9307	9:00pm	2:20am+1	1
TW9307	9:05pm	:25am+1	4
7C3404	10:10pm	3:40am+1	Daily

SHANGHAI (PVG)-SAIPAN

3U8647	10:20pm	4:50am+1	3, 4, 6, 7

HANGZHOU (HGH)-SAIPAN

JD395	8:05am	3:30pm	4
JD395	9:35pm	5:00am+1	7

GUANGZHOU (CAN)-SAIPAN

3U8645	7:55pm	2:40am+1	1, 5

BEIJING (PEK)-SAIPAN

MU763	4:40pm	12:30am+1	2, 4, 6

MANILA (MNL)-SAIPAN

UA182/174	12:40am	8:11am+1	3, 6 via GUM
PR110/UA174	10:05pm	8:11am+1	Daily via GUM
UA192/174	10:30pm	8:11am+1	2, 5 via GUM-ROR
UA184/174	10:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 4, 6, 7 via GUM

HONG KONG (HKG)-SAIPAN

OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:00am+1	7 via ICN
OZ722/625	1:15pm	1:40am+1	1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 via ICN
HX076	5:15pm	12:15am+1	3, 7
UO42	6:50pm	1:45am+1	7
UO42	9:30pm	4:25am+1	2, 4, 6
UA116/174	11:45pm	8:11am+1	2, 4 via GUM
UA116/174	11:55pm	8:11am+1	1, 3, 5, 6 via GUM

LEGEND: Days: Monday (1), Tuesday (2), Wednesday (3), Thursday (4), Friday (5), Saturday (6) and Sunday (7); 3U Sichuan Airlines, 7C Jeju Air, DL Delta Airlines, JD Beijing Capital, UO HK Express, HX HongKong Airlines, MU China Eastern, OZ Asiana Airlines, TW t'way Air, UA United Airlines, PR PAL Express; ETD: Estimated Time of Departure; ETA: Estimated Time of Arrival. *(The* Saipan Tribune *is not responsible for any changes in the schedule.)*

STAR MARIANAS AIR, INC.

SAIPAN TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1301	7:30AM	8:00AM	Daily
1302	11:30AM	12:00PM	Daily
1303	4:00PM	4:30PM	Daily

ROTA TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3101	8:15AM	8:45AM	Daily
3102	1:45PM	2:15PM	Daily
3103	4:45PM	5:15PM	Daily

ROTA TO GUAM

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
3401	12:15PM	12:45PM	Daily

GUAM TO ROTA

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
4301	1:00PM	1:30PM	Daily

SAIPAN TO TINIAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
1201	7:00AM	7:15AM	Daily
1202	8:00AM	8:15AM	Daily
1203	9:00AM	9:15AM	Daily
1204	10:00AM	10:15AM	Daily
1205	11:00AM	11:15AM	Daily
1206	12:00PM	12:15PM	Daily
1207	1:00PM	1:15PM	Daily
1208	2:00PM	2:15PM	Daily
1209	3:00PM	3:15PM	Daily
1210	4:00PM	4:15PM	Daily
1211	5:00PM	5:15PM	Daily
1212	6:00PM	6:15PM	Daily

TINIAN TO SAIPAN

FLIGHT #	DEPARTURE	ARRIVAL	FREQUENCY
2102	7:30AM	7:45AM	Daily
2103	8:30AM	8:45AM	Daily
2104	9:30AM	9:45AM	Daily
2105	10:30AM	10:45AM	Daily
2106	11:30AM	11:45AM	Daily
2107	12:30PM	12:45PM	Daily
2108	1:30PM	1:45PM	Daily
2109	2:30PM	2:45PM	Daily
2110	3:30PM	3:45PM	Daily
2111	4:30PM	4:45PM	Daily
2112	5:30PM	5:45PM	Daily
2113	6:30PM	6:45PM	Daily

US helps rescue 24 fishing crew on grounded ship

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (AP)—A large fishing ship ran aground on a remote Pacific atoll early Thursday, and the U.S. Coast Guard said it was helping coordinate the rescue of its 24 crew members.

The 308-foot (94-meter) Chinese-flagged Ou Ya Leng No. 6 ran aground on uninhabited Taka Atoll in the Marshall Islands, Petty Officer 3rd Class Matthew West said. He said a Coast Guard HC-130 Hercules plane had arrived in the area and made contact with the crew, who remained aboard and were using emergency generator power.

West said earlier reports the crew had left the ship and made it ashore on a lifeboat were incorrect. He said the Hercules had circled the area but there was nowhere suitable nearby for it to land.

Two fishing vessels should arrive Friday to help rescue the crew, West said, adding that the Marshall Islands had also sent a patrol craft. There were no reports of injuries or pollution, according to the Coast Guard.

West said it wasn't clear what caused the accident, the crew's nationalities, or the status of the ship's cargo and fuel. The fish carrier targets squid in the west and central Pacific Ocean, according to the Coast Guard.

US COAST GUARD

The 308-foot Chinese-flagged commercial fish carrier sits aground on Taka Atoll in the Republic of the Marshall Islands Jan. 2, 2019. The vessel reportedly grounded and was taking on water with 24 crew aboard.

Taka Atoll, also known as Toke Atoll, is part of the Ratak Chain and is not far from Utirik Atoll, which is inhabited by about 400 people. The Marshall Islands is home to about 60,000 people and has close ties to the U.S. under a Compact of Free Association.

West said that decisions about how to deal with the stricken ship would likely be made by the Marshall Islands government as it had grounded in the nation's territorial waters.

He said that communications with the region were difficult and that the situation remained fluid. The area was experiencing 11-foot (3.3-meter) -high seas and winds of 25 miles (40 kilometers) per hour, with conditions forecast to deteriorate, according to the Coast Guard.

The Hercules came from Wake Island, where the crew was previously involved in helping with a vessel that caught fire while carrying cars from Japan to Hawaii. Sixteen crew members were rescued from the Sincerity Ace vessel, while four others were listed as unresponsive and one remained missing.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Construction Carpenter
NUMBER OF OPENING: 450
WAGES/SALARY: $7.25 per hour / Overtime Rate: $10.88 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Follow established safety rules and regulations and maintain a safe and clean environment.
- Study specifications in blueprints, sketches, or building plans to prepare project layout and determine dimensions and materials required.
- Measure and mark cutting lines on materials, using a ruler, pencil, chalk, and marking gauge.
- Shape or cut materials to specified measurements, using hand tools, machines, or power saws.
- Install structures or fixtures, such as windows, frames, floorings, trim, or hardware, using carpenters' hand or power tools.
- Verify trueness of structure, using plumb bob and level. Select and order lumber or other required materials.
- Arrange for subcontractors to deal with special areas, such as heating or electrical wiring work.
- Maintain records, document actions, and present written progress reports.
- Build or repair cabinets, doors, frameworks, floors, or other wooden fixtures used in buildings, using woodworking machines, carpenter's hand tools, or power tools.
- Erect scaffolding or ladders for assembling structures above ground level. Inspect ceiling or floor tile, wall coverings, siding, glass, or woodwork to detect broken or damaged structures.
- Assemble and fasten materials to make frameworks or props, using hand tools and wood screws, nails, dowel pins, or glue.
- Remove damaged or defective parts or sections of structures and repair or replace, using hand tools. Finish surfaces of woodwork or wallboard in houses or buildings, using paint, hand tools, or paneling. Apply shock-absorbing, sound-deadening, or decorative paneling to ceilings or walls.
- Cover subfloors with building paper to keep out moisture and lay hardwood, parquet, or wood-strip-block floors by nailing floors to subfloor or cementing them to mastic or asphalt base.
- Fill cracks or other defects in plaster or plasterboard and sand patch, using patching plaster, trowel, and sanding tool.
- Perform minor plumbing, welding, or concrete mixing work.
- Prepare cost estimates for clients or employers.
- Construct forms or chutes for pouring concrete. Work with or remove hazardous material.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
12 months of on-the-job experience as a Construction Carpenter is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $7.25 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $10.88.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
Please visit Imperial Pacific Recruitment office located at Vesctor Office #6, Capitol Hill, Saipan or contact our recruitment team at 670-237-9901.

SWA CONTACT INFORMATION
Please inquire about the job opportunity or send applications and/or resumes, indicating availability, to CNMI Department of Labor at Building #1356 Mednilla Avenue Capitol Hill, Saipan MP 96950 or visit their website at www.marianaslabor.net.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Construction Laborer
NUMBER OF OPENING: 60
WAGES/SALARY: $7.60 per hour / Overtime Rate: $11.40 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Control traffic passing near, in, or around work zones.
- Clean or prepare construction sites to eliminate possible hazards.
- Signal equipment operators to facilitate alignment, movement, or adjustment of machinery, equipment, or materials. Read plans, instructions, or specifications to determine work activities.
- Load, unload, or identify building materials, machinery, or tools, distributing them to the appropriate locations, according to project plans or specifications.
- Measure, mark, or record openings or distances to layout areas where construction work will be performed.
- Dig ditches or trenches, backfill excavations, or compact and level earth to grade specifications, using picks, shovels, pneumatic tampers, or rakes.
- Mix, pour, or spread concrete, using portable cement mixers.
- Tend pumps, compressors, or generators to provide power for tools, machinery, or equipment or to heat or move materials, such as asphalt.
- Erect or dismantle scaffolding, shoring, braces, traffic barricades, ramps, or other temporary structures.
- Provide assistance to craft workers, such as carpenters, plasterers, or masons.
- Lubricate, clean, or repair machinery, equipment, or tools. Position or dismantle forms for pouring concrete, using saws, hammers, nails, or bolts.
- Smooth or finish freshly poured cement or concrete, using floats, trowels, screeds, or powered cement finishing tools.
- Operate jackhammers or drills to break up concrete or pavement.
- Install sewer, water, or storm drain pipes, using pipe-laying machinery or laser guidance equipment.
- Operate or maintain air monitoring or other sampling devices in confined or hazardous environments.
- Mix ingredients to create compounds for covering or cleaning surfaces.
- Grind, scrape, sand, or polish surfaces, such as concrete, marble, terrazzo, or wood flooring, using abrasive tools or machines.
- Position, join, align, or seal structural components, such as concrete wall sections or pipes.
- Tend machines that pump concrete, grout, cement, sand, plaster, or stucco through spray guns for application to ceilings or walls. Spray materials, such as water, sand, steam, vinyl, paint, or stucco, through hoses to clean, coat, or seal surfaces.
- Apply caulking compounds by hand or caulking guns to protect against entry of water or air.
- Mop, brush, or spread paints, cleaning solutions, or other compounds over surfaces to clean them or to provide protection.
- Perform site activities required of green certified construction practices, such as implementing waste management procedures, identifying materials for reuse, or installing erosion or sedimentation control mechanisms.
- Apply weather-stripping to reduce energy loss.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
12 months of on-the-job experience as a Construction Laborer is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $7.60 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $11.40.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
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SWA CONTACT INFORMATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Mason
NUMBER OF OPENING: 600
WAGES/SALARY: $7.25 per hour / Overtime Rate: $10.88 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Check the forms that hold the concrete to see that they are properly constructed.
- Set the forms that hold concrete to the desired pitch and depth, and align them.
- Spread, level, and smooth concrete, using rake, shovel, hand or power trowel, hand or power screed, and float.
- Monitor how the wind, heat, or cold affect the curing of the concrete throughout the entire process.
- Mold expansion joints and edges, using edging tools, jointers, and straightedge.
- Signal truck driver to position truck to facilitate pouring concrete, and move chute to direct concrete on forms.
- Direct the casting of the concrete and supervise laborers who use shovels or special tools to spread it. Produce rough concrete surface, using broom.
- Apply hardening and sealing compounds to cure surface of concrete, and waterproof or restore surface. Operate power vibrator to compact concrete. Install anchor bolts, steel plates, door sills and other fixtures in freshly poured concrete or pattern or stamp the surface to provide a decorative finish.
- Wet surface to prepare for bonding, fill holes and cracks with grout or slurry, and smooth, using trowel. Waterproof or restore concrete surfaces, using appropriate compounds. Mix cement, sand, and water to produce concrete, grout, or slurry, using hoe, trowel, tamper, scraper, or concrete-mixing machine.
- Chip, scrape, and grind high spots, ridges, and rough projections to finish concrete, using pneumatic chisels, power grinders, or hand tools.
- Cut out damaged areas, drill holes for reinforcing rods, and position reinforcing rods to repair concrete, using power saw and drill.
- Wet concrete surface, and rub with stone to smooth surface and obtain specified finish.
- Clean chipped area, using wire brush, and feel and observe surface to determine if it is rough or uneven. Build wooden molds, and clamp molds around area to be repaired, using hand tools.
- Sprinkle colored marble or stone chips, powdered steel, or coloring powder over surface to produce prescribed finish.
- Fabricate concrete beams, columns, and panels. Polish surface, using polishing or surfacing machine.
- Cut metal division strips, and press them into terrazzo base so that top edges form desired design or pattern.
- Push roller over surface to embed chips in surface.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
12 months of on-the-job experience as a Mason is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $7.35 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $11.03.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
Please visit Imperial Pacific Recruitment office located at Vesctor Office #6, Capitol Hill, Saipan or contact our recruitment team at 670-237-9901.

SWA CONTACT INFORMATION
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Business

Zoo animals still need to be fed despite government shutdown

WASHINGTON (AP)— Hungry pandas don't particularly care whether there's a partial government shutdown.

The Washington National Zoological Park's most famous residents still need to be fed, as do thousands of other animals, even as the facility closed its gates Wednesday.

The zoo is part of the Smithsonian network of museums, and all stayed open through New Year's Day using pre-existing funds. That money has now been exhausted.

"We plan to maintain the current level of care for the animals, and that's not going to change no matter what," said National Zoo spokeswoman Annalisa Meyer.

There also are animal pregnancies to monitor and poop to be scooped.

That's why more than half the 321 employees of the zoo and its associated Conservation Biology Institute will remain on the job.

The zoo, however, will remain closed to the public. On Wednesday, the normally bustling Connecticut Avenue gateway was locked tight. Just behind the fence, a statue of a giant panda that would normally be covered in climbing children sat alone and neglected. Meyer said the zoo's animal care staff will use the downtime to conduct comprehensive medical checks on the animals.

The zoo also will be shutting down its four popular live animal cams showing the giant pandas, elephants, lions and naked mole-rats. Meyer said the livestreams don't really need federal employees to run them on a daily basis but still "require federal resources."

The panda streams, in particular, are one of the zoo's signature attractions, and the naked mole-rat cam unexpectedly became riveting viewing in recent months amid a bloody battle for supremacy that killed four of the wrinkly rodents before a new queen was established.

The partial government shutdown began on Dec. 22. President Donald Trump's demand for money for a border wall with Mexico has been the sticking point in passing funding bills for several government departments. Trump said Wednesday that the shutdown will last "as long as it takes."

The zoo and the Smithsonian network maintain an unusual relationship with the federal government. They are technically part of the Department of the Interior, and the zoo receives about 70 percent of its operating budget from federal appropriations. But they are run by their own Board of Regents, and Smithsonian spokeswoman Linda St. Thomas characterized the network as "quasi-federal."

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Electrician
NUMBER OF OPENING: 240
WAGES/SALARY: $8.00 per hour / Overtime Rate: $12.00 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Plan layout and installation of electrical wiring, equipment, or fixtures, based on job specifications and local codes. Connect wires to circuit breakers, transformers, or other components.
- Test electrical systems or continuity of circuits in electrical wiring, equipment, or fixtures, using testing devices, such as ohmmeters, voltmeters, or oscilloscopes, to ensure compatibility and safety of system. Use a variety of tools or equipment, such as power construction equipment, measuring devices, power tools, and testing equipment, such as oscilloscopes, ammeters, or test lamps.
- Inspect electrical systems, equipment, or components to identify hazards, defects, or the need for adjustment or repair, and to ensure compliance with codes.
- Prepare sketches or follow blueprints to determine the location of wiring or equipment and to ensure conformance to building and safety codes.
- Diagnose malfunctioning systems, apparatus, or components, using test equipment and hand tools to locate the cause of a breakdown and correct the problem.
- Work from ladders, scaffolds, or roofs to install, maintain, or repair electrical wiring, equipment, or fixtures.
- Advise management on whether continued operation of equipment could be hazardous.
- Maintain current electrician's license or identification card to meet governmental regulations.
- Place conduit, pipes, or tubing, inside designated partitions, walls, or other concealed areas, and pull insulated wires or cables through the conduit to complete circuits between boxes.
- Direct or train workers to install, maintain, or repair electrical wiring, equipment, or fixtures.
- Repair or replace wiring, equipment, or fixtures, using hand tools or power tools. Install ground leads and connect power cables to equipment, such as motors.
- Assemble, install, test, or maintain electrical or electronic wiring, equipment, appliances, apparatus, or fixtures, using hand tools or power tools.
- Perform business management duties, such as maintaining records or files, preparing reports, or ordering supplies or equipment.
- Fasten small metal or plastic boxes to walls to house electrical switches or outlets.
- Construct or fabricate parts, using hand tools, according to specifications.
- Perform physically demanding tasks, such as digging trenches to lay conduit or moving or lifting heavy objects.
- Provide assistance during emergencies by operating floodlights or generators, placing flares, or driving needed vehicles.
- Provide preliminary sketches or cost estimates for materials or services.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
24 months of on-the-job experience as an Electrician is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $8.00 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $12.00.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
Please visit Imperial Pacific Recruitment office located at Vesctor Office #6, Capitol Hill, Saipan or contact our recruitment team at 670-237-9901.

SWA CONTACT INFORMATION
Please inquire about the job opportunity or send applications and/or resumes, indicating availability, to CNMI Department of Labor at Building #1356 Mednilla Avenue Capitol Hill, Saipan MP 96950 or visit their website at www.marianaslabor.net.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Plumber
NUMBER OF OPENING: 500
WAGES/SALARY: $7.35 per hour / Overtime Rate: $11.03 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Assemble pipe sections, tubing, or fittings, using couplings, clamps, screws, bolts, cement, plastic solvent, caulking, or soldering, brazing, or welding equipment.
- Install pipe assemblies, fittings, valves, appliances such as dishwashers or water heaters, or fixtures such as sinks or toilets, using hand or power tools.
- Keep records of work assignments.
- Fill pipes or plumbing fixtures with water or air and observe pressure gauges to detect and locate leaks. Direct helpers engaged in pipe cutting, preassembly, or installation of plumbing systems or components.
- Maintain or repair plumbing by replacing defective washers, replacing or mending broken pipes, or opening clogged drains. Locate and mark the position of pipe installations, connections, passage holes, or fixtures in structures, using measuring instruments such as rulers or levels.
- Measure, cut, thread, or bend pipe to required angle, using hand or power tools or machines, such as pipe cutters, pipe-threading machines, or pipe-bending machines.
- Review blueprints, building codes, or specifications to determine work details or procedures.
- Anchor steel supports from ceiling joists to hold pipes in place.
- Estimate time, material, or labor costs for use in project plans.
- Install underground storm, sanitary, or water piping systems, extending piping as needed to connect fixtures and plumbing.
- Inspect structures to assess material or equipment needs, to establish the sequence of pipe installations, or to plan installation around obstructions, such as electrical wiring.
- Install green plumbing equipment, such as faucet flow restrictors, dual-flush or pressure-assisted flush toilets, or tankless hot water heaters.
- Cut openings in structures to accommodate pipes or pipe fittings, using hand or power tools.
- Weld small pipes or special piping, using specialized techniques, equipment, or materials, such as computer-assisted welding or microchip fabrication.
- Statement Install alternative water sources, such as rainwater harvesting systems or graywater reuse systems.
- , Recommend energy or water saving products, such as low-flow faucets or shower heads, water-saving toilets, or high-efficiency hot water heaters. Green Task Statement Form

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
24 months of on-the-job experience as a Plumber is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $7.35 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $11.03.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
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SWA CONTACT INFORMATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Riveter
NUMBER OF OPENING: 40
WAGES/SALARY: $14.55 per hour / Overtime Rate: $21.83 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Rivets structural members, assemblies, and parts of structures, using portable riveting, dimpling, and drilling machines and hand tools.
- Reads work orders, blueprints, and operation sheets to determine sequence of operations and type size and hole pattern of rivets.
- Removes temporary bolts or fasteners and inserts rivets in pre-drilled holes.
- Places drive head of rivet gun against rivet shank and pulls trigger to actuate hammer that spreads rivet, or spreads rivet, using rivet set and hammer.
- Rivets together adjoining edges of structural components and assemblies.
- Places two dies of rivet squeezer over head and shank of rivet, and presses trigger to activate dies that flatten shank of rivet.
- Drills and reams rivet holes and drills out defective rivets. Forms dimples around rivet holes, using portable dimpling gun or stationary dimpling machine.
- May align and assemble parts to be riveted, using jigs, holding fixtures, pins, clamps, and fasteners.
- May buck rivets

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
12 months of on-the-job experience as a Riveter is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is "$14.55 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of "$21.83

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
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BUSINESS BRIEFS

Airport drop-off changes raise access, expense concerns

CLEVELAND (AP)—The Cleveland airport is now restricting passenger drop-offs in front of the terminal as traffic and congestion have increased—likely to the displeasure of travelers, according to transportation companies. Changes at Cleveland Hopkins International Airport take effect this week. Private car services and ride-share drivers will no longer be able to drop their passengers off on the upper, ticketing level of the terminal, at departing airlines' doors with the changes. The Plain Dealer reported drop-offs will happen instead at one end of the lower, baggage-claim level. The airport explained the change, saying roads in front of the terminal now sometimes back up onto a nearby state route.

Survey suggests improving business conditions in Midwest

OMAHA, Neb. (AP)—Business conditions improved last month in nine Midwest and Plains states despite shortages of skilled workers, according to a monthly survey report issued Wednesday. The Mid-America Business Conditions Index rose to 55.2 in December from 54.1 in November, the report said. The October reading was 54.9. Survey organizers say any score above 50 suggests growth. "The regional economy continues to expand at a positive pace," said Creighton University economist Ernie Goss, who oversees the survey. "However, as in recent months, shortages of skilled workers remain an impediment to even stronger growth. Furthermore, supply managers are reporting negative impacts from tariffs and trade skirmishes."

Penn State moves to trademark the Happy Valley nickname

STATE COLLEGE, Pa. (AP)—It's sometimes called State College and sometimes University Park, but Penn State wants to ensure it holds the trademark when it's called Happy Valley. The Centre Daily Times reported Wednesday the university asked the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office last month to trademark the term that refers to the school's setting in the mountains of central Pennsylvania. The application says it wants to use the term on clothing and headwear. The paper says that the trademark had been registered but that the holder didn't renew it. A Penn State spokeswoman says the school wants to consult local government and business leaders about the use of the term. The newspaper says one of its columnists apparently popularized the term in a 1962 piece headlined, "Happy Valley and the Jet Age."

Department store executive Blake Nordstrom dies at 58

NEW YORK (AP)—Blake Nordstrom, who led the upscale department store chain Nordstrom as co-president with his brothers Erik and Peter, has died. He was 58. The Seattle-based company did not disclose the cause of death, saying Nordstrom passed away unexpectedly early Wednesday. Last month, Nordstrom said that he had been diagnosed with lymphoma, but that his cancer was treatable. Nordstrom Inc. said in a statement that its executive leadership will continue under Erik and Peter Nordstrom. The company is publicly traded, but family members still own about 30 percent of its shares. The family group had hoped to take the company private last year, but a special committee for its board rejected the offer as too low. Blake Nordstrom had worked at the chain for more than 40 years.

FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Crane and Tower Operator
NUMBER OF OPENING: 20
WAGES/SALARY: $21.25 per hour / Overtime Rate: $31.88 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Determine load weights and check them against lifting capacities to prevent overload.
- Move levers, depress foot pedals, or turn dials to operate cranes, cherry pickers, electromagnets, or other moving equipment for lifting, moving, or placing loads.
- Inspect and adjust crane mechanisms or lifting accessories to prevent malfunctions or damage.
- Inspect cables or grappling devices for wear and install or replace cables, as needed.
- Direct helpers engaged in placing blocking or outrigging under cranes.
- Clean, lubricate, and maintain mechanisms such as cables, pulleys, or grappling devices, making repairs as necessary.
- Load or unload bundles from trucks or move containers to storage bins, using moving equipment.
- Review daily work or delivery schedules to determine orders, sequences of deliveries, or special loading instructions.
- Inspect bundle packaging for conformance to regulations or customer requirements and remove and batch packaging tickets.
- Direct truck drivers backing vehicles into loading bays and cover, uncover, or secure loads for delivery.
- Weigh bundles, using floor scales, and record weights for company records

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
24 months of on-the-job experience as a Crane and Tower Operator is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $21.25 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $31.88.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
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FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Steel Worker
NUMBER OF OPENING: 50
WAGES/SALARY: $14.55 per hour / Overtime Rate: $21.83 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Read specifications or blueprints to determine the locations, quantities, or sizes of materials required. Connect columns, beams, and girders with bolts, following blueprints and instructions from supervisors. Bolt aligned structural steel members in position for permanent riveting, bolting, or welding into place. Fasten structural steel members to hoist cables, using chains, cables, or rope.
- Hoist steel beams, girders, or columns into place, using cranes or signaling hoisting equipment operators to lift and position structural steel members.
- Verify vertical and horizontal alignment of structural steel members, using plumb bobs, laser equipment, transits, or levels.
- Cut, bend, or weld steel pieces, using metal shears, torches, or welding equipment.
- Erect metal or precast concrete components for structures, such as buildings, bridges, dams, towers, storage tanks, fences, or highway guard rails. Force structural steel members into final positions, using turnbuckles, crowbars, jacks, or hand tools.
- Pull, push, or pry structural steel members into approximate positions for bolting into place.
- Unload and position prefabricated steel units for hoisting as needed.
- Drive drift pins through rivet holes to align rivet holes in structural steel members with corresponding holes in previously placed members.
- Assemble hoisting equipment or rigging, such as cables, pulleys, or hooks, to move heavy equipment or materials.
- Fabricate metal parts, such as steel frames, columns, beams, or girders, according to blueprints or instructions from supervisors.
- Dismantle structures or equipment. Ride on girders or other structural steel members to position them or use rope to guide them into position.
- Hold rivets while riveters use air hammers to form heads on rivets.
- Insert sealing strips, wiring, insulating material, ladders, flanges, gauges, or valves, depending on types of structures being assembled.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
12 months of on-the-job experience as a Steel Worker is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $14.55 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $21.83

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

DEDUCTIONS
The employer will make all deductions from the employee's paycheck required by law.

INBOUND/OUTBOUND TRANSPORTATION AND SUBSISTENCE
The Employer shall pay for all inbound transportation and subsistence from the place of recruitment to the place of work. Upon completion of the work contract, or where the worker is dismissed earlier, the employer will provide or pay for worker's reasonable costs of return transportation and subsistence back home or to the place the worker originally departed to work, except where the worker will not return due to subsequent employment with another employer or where the employer has appropriately reported a worker's voluntary abandonment of employment. The amount of transportation payment or reimbursement will be equal to the most economical and reasonable common carrier for the distances involved, provided that the amount for daily subsistence will be at least $12.26 per day during travel to a maximum of $51.00 per day with receipts.

DAILY TRANSPORTATION
The employer will provide daily transportation at no charge to and from the worker's provided lodging for the duration of the employment.

FIRST WORK WEEK REIMBURSEMENT
Workers will be reimbursed in the first workweek for all visa, visa processing, border crossing and other related fees, including those mandated by the government (except passport fees).

PROVISION OF TOOLS, SUPPLIES AND EQUIPMENT
The employer will provide workers at no charge all tools, supplies, and equipment required to perform the job. Furthermore, the employer will supply workers at no charge all safety clothing and equipment and will require all workers to wear such clothing and equipment always during work.

SAFETY EQUIPMENT
Employees are required to wear protective equipment i.e. safety hat, safety shoes, goggles, or other garments or equipment at all times during the work hours at the construction site. Employees are also required to follow all safety regulations.

RECRUITMENT INFORMATION
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FOR IMMEDIATE HIRING

COMPANY: IMPERIAL PACIFIC INTERNATIONAL (CNMI), LLC
JOB TITLE: Welder
NUMBER OF OPENING: 300
WAGES/SALARY: $8.35 per hour / Overtime Rate: $12.53 per hour

EMPLOYMENT BASIS & DURATION
This job opportunity is for a temporary, full-time position beginning on January 31, 2019 and ending on January 30, 2020.

JOB LOCATION
Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel, Saipan, Northern Mariana Islands 96950.

JOB DUTIES
- Weld components in flat, vertical, or overhead positions. Operate safety equipment and use safe work habits.
- Lay out, position, align, and secure parts and assemblies prior to assembly, using straightedges, combination squares, calipers, and rulers.
- Examine work pieces for defects and measure work pieces with straightedges or templates to ensure conformance with specifications.
- Recognize, set up, and operate hand and power tools common to the welding trade, such as shielded metal arc and gas metal arc welding equipment.
- Weld separately or in combination, using aluminum, stainless steel, cast iron, and other alloys.
- Clamp, hold, tack-weld, heat-bend, grind or bolt component parts to obtain required configurations and positions for welding.
- Select and install torches, torch tips, filler rods, and flux, according to welding chart specifications or types and thicknesses of metals.
- Ignite torches or start power supplies and strike arcs by touching electrodes to metals being welded, completing electrical circuits.
- Connect and turn regulator valves to activate and adjust gas flow and pressure so that desired flames are obtained.
- Determine required equipment and welding methods, applying knowledge of metallurgy, geometry, and welding techniques.
- Monitor the fitting, burning, and welding processes to avoid overheating of parts or warping, shrinking, distortion, or expansion of material.
- Operate manual or semi-automatic welding equipment to fuse metal segments, using processes such as gas tungsten arc, gas metal arc, flux-cored arc, plasma arc, shielded metal arc, resistance welding, and submerged arc welding.
- Analyze engineering drawings, blueprints, specifications, sketches, work orders, and material safety data sheets to plan layout, assembly, and welding operations.
- Mark or tag material with proper job number, piece marks, and other identifying marks as required.
- Chip or grind off excess weld, slag, or spatter, using hand scrapers or power chippers, portable grinders, or arc-cutting equipment.
- Remove rough spots from workpieces, using portable grinders, hand files, or scrapers.
- Prepare all material surfaces to be welded, ensuring that there is no loose or thick scale, slag, rust, moisture, grease, or other foreign matter.
- Preheat workpieces prior to welding or bending, using torches or heating furnaces.
- Develop templates and models for welding projects, using mathematical calculations based on blueprint information.
- Position and secure workpieces, using hoists, cranes, wire, and banding machines or hand tools.
- Guide and direct flames or electrodes on or across workpieces to straighten, bend, melt, or build up metal.
- Detect faulty operation of equipment or defective materials and notify supervisors.
- Clean or degrease parts, using wire brushes, portable grinders, or chemical baths.
- Cut, contour, and bevel metal plates and structural shapes to dimensions as specified by blueprints, layouts, work orders, and templates, using powered saws, hand shears, or chipping knives. Repair products by dismantling, straightening, reshaping, and reassembling parts, using cutting torches, straightening presses, and hand tools.
- Fill holes, and increase the size of metal parts. Check grooves, angles, or gap allowances, using micrometers, calipers, and precision measuring instruments.
- Operate metal shaping, straightening, and bending machines, such as brakes and shears.
- Set up and use ladders and scaffolding as necessary to complete work.
- Hammer out bulges or bends in metal workpieces.
- Dismantle metal assemblies or cut scrap metal, using thermal-cutting equipment, such as flame-cutting torches or plasma-arc equipment.
- Signal crane operators to move large workpieces.
- Use fire suppression methods in industrial emergencies. Estimate materials needed for production and manufacturing and maintain required stocks of materials.
- Join parts such as beams.

QUALIFICATION REQUIREMENTS
24 months of on-the-job experience as a Welder is a minimum requirement for this position.

WORK HOURS
Employees hired under this announcement will work on full time employment thirty-five (35) hours per week. Each day is 7 working hours with pay and 1 hour duty break with no pay. Each week will has 2 full rest day. There will be a rotating three (3) shifts per day. Day Shift will be from 6:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. Swing Shift will be from 2:00 p.m. until 10:00 p.m. Night Shift will be from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. Employee hired under this announcement will be rotated through each of the three (3) shifts on an ongoing basis until the project is complete. Standard salary per hour is $8.35 and the time worked over forty (40) hours per week will be compensated at an overtime rate of $12.53.

JOB LOCATION
Work will be performed at the Imperial Pacific Resort Hotel-Saipan worksite.

SINGLE WORKWEEK FOR PAY
The employer will use a single workweek as its standard for computing wages due.

FREQUENCY OF PAY
Workers will be paid on bi-weekly basis by check.

HOUSING & MEAL
The employer will provide housing during the employment. The employees will be provided one (1) duty meal per day at no expense for the duration of the employment.

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Nation

US Catholic bishops to pray over clergy sexual abuse scandal

MUNDELEIN, Ill. (AP)—U.S.-based Roman Catholic bishops gathered Wednesday for a weeklong retreat near Chicago on the church sexual abuse scandal that organizers say will focus on prayer and spiritual reflection and not formulating policy.

The retreat began a day after The Associated Press reported that the Vatican blocked U.S. bishops from taking measures last year to address the scandal because U.S. church leaders didn't discuss the legally problematic proposals with the Holy See enough beforehand.

The rebuke from Rome was contained in a letter from a Vatican official before the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops met in November. The move stunned abuse survivors and some other Catholics demanding actions.

The retreat also is a prelude to a summit of the world's bishops at the Vatican next month to forge a comprehensive response to the crisis that has lashed the church.

The meetings follow two blistering reports during 2018 from state attorneys general—in Illinois and Pennsylvania—alleging negligence by state church leaders.

Here's a look at the retreat.

WHAT'S ON THE AGENDA?

This is about prayer, not policy-making, organizers say.

According to the Archdiocese of Chicago spokeswoman Anne Maselli, bishops gathering at the Mundelein Seminary will be praying, fasting and participating in spiritual lectures. And they will be alone: No staff members, other priests or members of the public or media are invited. Cardinal Daniel DiNardo, president of the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, said in a news release that they are convening "to pray on the intense matters before us."

The Catholic seminary at the University of St. Mary of the Lake in Mundelein, 40 miles (64 kilometers) north of Chicago, is the largest of its kind in the U.S. and home to roughly 200 seminarians from about 40 dioceses across the country and globe. According to its website, the lakefront campus blends "Colonial Revival and the architecture of Renaissance Rome, joining the Roman traditions of Catholicism with American cultural traditions."

Tied to the gate at the seminary's entrance were white ribbons with signs beneath them that read: "These ribbons represent prayers for our church." One ribbon bore the words: "Pope Francis & priests for mercy & healing"

A sign also advised that the campus was closed for a private retreat and that trespassing was prohibited.

WHO ARE THE MAIN PLAYERS?

Pope Francis has dispatched Fr. Raniero Cantalamessa, the official papal preacher, to lead the retreat. And it's no accident that it's being held in Chicago, long considered a center of American Catholicism. The hosting Chicago archbishop, Cardinal Blase Cupich , was Francis' first major U.S. appointment and was picked by the pope to help organize the Vatican summit.

Cupich, who is considered a moderate, was the lead signatory on a recent letter to bishops around the world warning that a failure to deal with abuse now will jeopardize the church's mission globally. It also urged summit attendees to meet with clergy sexual abuse victims "to learn firsthand the suffering they have endured." Cupich issued a statement expressing regret for "our failures to address the scourge of clerical sexual abuse," after Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's report in December alleging that the church had failed to disclose the names of at least 500 clergy members in the state accused of sexually abusing children.

A Pennsylvania grand jury report early last year alleged that hundreds of priests abused at least 1,000 children over seven decades in that state.

AP

Peter Isely, a clergy abuse victim and founding member of the advocacy groups Survivors Network of those Abused by Priests (SNAP) and Ending Clergy Abuse, speaks to media in Chicago on Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019.

WHAT CAN IT REALLY ACCOMPLISH?

Potentially a good deal, according to Notre Dame researcher and teacher Timothy O'Malley. He says one of Francis' biggest concerns has been that the bishops experience a spiritual renewal—and "a spirit of penance"—along with regulations governing their behavior.

"When the bishops meet in public to discuss these procedures, there is a danger that it's less an act of contrition and more an occasion for scoring political points," he said. "Part of the corruption is based in a certain clerical culture where bishops pursued self-interest, whether their own or their diocese's, at the expense of listening to lay victims. This retreat ... is a first step toward a renewal of the (church leadership) as a whole in the United States."

Young immigrants seeking refuge from abuse face denials

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Some immigrant youth looking to start over in the United States after fleeing abusive homes are seeing their applications for green cards rejected because the Trump administration says they're too old.

A U.S. government program in place since 1990 has let young immigrants subject to abuse, abandonment or neglect by a parent seek a court-appointed guardian and a green card to stay in the country.

While applicants must file paperwork before age 21, the Trump administration has said some are too old to qualify once they turn 18, prompting a flurry of denial notices over the past year in New York, Texas and California and additional questions of applicants in New Jersey.

Immigrant advocates have filed lawsuits in New York and California and said hundreds of young people could be affected by the change.

"This administration is literally going after some of the most vulnerable people trying to seek relief," said Mary Tanagho Ross, an appellate staff attorney at Los Angeles-based Public Counsel's immigrant rights project.

The Trump administration has been pushing to harden the U.S. border and slash immigration with a series of steps targeting Central American children who arrive on the border alone or with relatives. Former Attorney General Jeff Sessions sought to make it tougher for young immigrants fleeing gangs or domestic violence to win asylum—though some guidance he issued on such cases was recently blocked by a federal judge. And the U.S. government has been slower to release immigrant children caught on the border to family in the country.

The program is the best chance for many of the thousands of young immigrants arriving on the border to be allowed to stay in the U.S. Under U.S. law, they can apply for green cards once a designated court in the U.S. state where they live assigns them a guardian and declares they are eligible to apply.

A now-22-year-old woman in Northern California, who requested anonymity out of fear the U.S. government will retaliate against her for speaking out, fled her Mexican immigrant parents' home in high school after her father repeatedly beat her.

She was taken in by a teacher, who helped her get started in college and took care of her when she was diagnosed with cancer. When a judge formally named the teacher her legal guardian it was a huge relief, she said. But she later learned the U.S. government wouldn't accept the court's order for her green card application. She dropped to the floor and sobbed, she said.

"I just couldn't believe I was going to have to try to defend myself again," she said. "I don't refer to her by her name or that she's my guardian—I just call her mom."

More than 50,000 young immigrants have obtained green cards by qualifying for special immigrant juvenile status since 2010. The overwhelming majority of applications have been approved by U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services, making the program a safer bet for many immigrant children seeking refuge in the United States than pleading a case before an immigration officer or judge for asylum.

Applications to the program have surged in recent years, rising more than three-fold between the 2014 and 2017 fiscal years, federal data shows. During that time, the number of denials also increased, with 2,000 applications rejected over the past two fiscal years—more than all of the previous seven years combined.

Soldier charged with murder after wife's body found in trash

INDIANAPOLIS (AP)—Authorities say a 21-year-old soldier who flew from Colorado to Indiana and allegedly killed his wife, then fled to Thailand, is now wanted for military desertion.

Prosecutors in Indiana filed murder charges Wednesday against Peter Van Bawi Lian for the death of Khuang Par, whose body was found in an Indianapolis trash bin on Dec. 23.

Indianapolis police say Lian is on active duty with the U.S. Army. Police say he flew on Dec. 22 from Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, Colorado, to Indianapolis, where Par had moved to be with family after Lian was arrested in November on charges of assaulting her.

Flight records show Lian flew to Bangkok, Thailand, on Dec. 24.

The Indianapolis Star reports Lian was due back at Fort Carson on Dec. 26 but didn't return.

Asia

Chinese spacecraft makes first landing on moon's far side

BEIJING (AP)—A Chinese spacecraft on Thursday made the first-ever landing on the far side of the moon in the latest achievement for the country's growing space program.

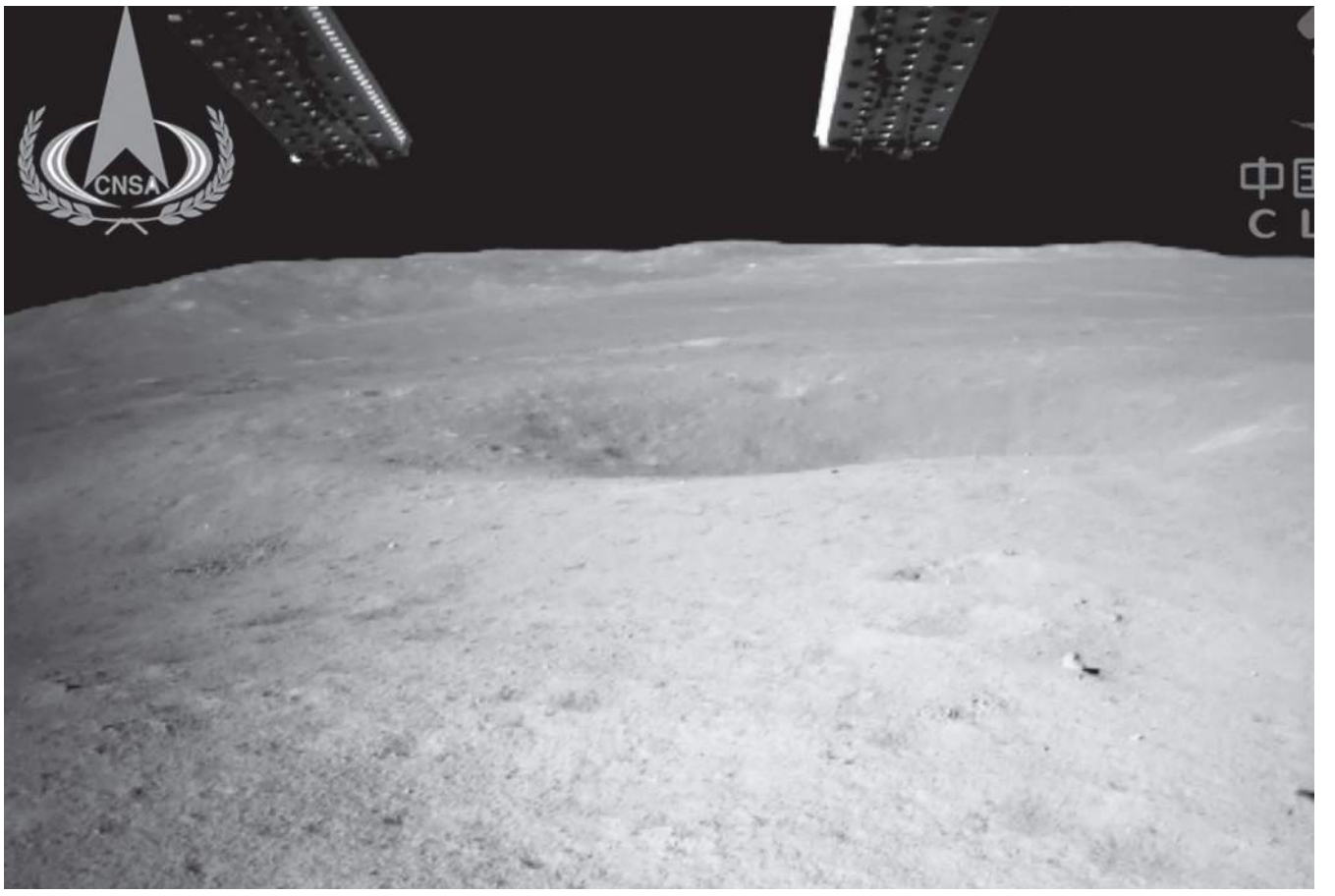
The relatively unexplored far side of the moon faces away from Earth and is also known as the dark side.

A photo taken by the lunar explorer Chang'e 4 at 11:40 a.m. and published online by the official Xinhua News Agency shows a small crater and a barren surface that appears to be illuminated by a light from the probe.

Chang'e 4 had touched down on the surface at 10:26 a.m., the China National Space Administration said. The landing was announced by state broadcaster China Central Television at the top of its noon news broadcast.

The landing highlights China's growing ambitions as a space power. In 2013, Chang'e 3, the predecessor craft to the current mission, made the first moon landing since the then-Soviet Union's Luna 24 in 1976. The United States is the only other country that has carried out moon landings.

The work of Chang'e 4, which is carrying a rover, includes carrying out astronomical observations and probing the structure and mineral composition of the terrain.



In this photo provided Jan. 3, 2019, by China National Space Administration via Xinhua News Agency, the first image of the moon's far side taken by China's Chang'e-4 probe. AP

"The far side of the moon is a rare quiet place that is free from interference of radio signals from Earth," mission spokesman Yu Guobin said, according to Xinhua. "This probe can fill the gap of low-frequency observation in radio astronomy and will provide important information for studying the origin of stars and nebula evolution."

One challenge of operating on the far side of the moon is communicating with Earth. China launched a relay satellite in May so that Chang'e 4 can send back information.

China plans to send its Chang'e 5 probe to the moon next year and have it return to Earth with samples—the first time that will have been done since the Soviet mission in 1976.

A Long March 3B rocket carrying Chang'e 4 blasted off on Dec. 8 from Xichang Satellite Launch Center in southern China. Chang'e is the name of a Chinese goddess who, according to legend, has lived on the moon for millennia.

Lawyers try to seize Japanese assets over Korean forced work

SEOUL, South Korea (AP)—Lawyers for South Koreans forced into wartime labor have taken legal steps to seize the South Korean assets of a Japanese company they are trying to pressure into following a court ruling to provide them compensation.

Lawyer Lim Jae-sung said Thursday the court in the city of Pohang could decide in two or three weeks whether to accept the request to seize the 2.34 million shares Nippon Steel & Sumitomo Metal Corp. holds in its joint venture with South Korean steelmaker POSCO, which are estimated to be worth around $9.7 million.

Lim said Nippon Steel has been refusing to discuss compensation despite a ruling by South Korea's Supreme Court in October that the company should pay 100 million won ($88,000) each to four plaintiffs who worked at its steel mills during Japan's colonial rule of the Korean Peninsula. The court made a similar ruling on Japan's Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in November, triggering a diplomatic spats between the countries.

It's unlikely the Japanese companies will follow the South Korean rulings. The Japanese government has expressed strong regret over the rulings and considers all wartime compensation issues settled by a treaty both countries signed in 1965.

Lawyers for forced laborers for Nippon Steel had set a Dec. 24 deadline for the company to respond to their request to begin compensation discussions, but the steelmaker did not respond. Lim said the lawyers decided not to file for a court order that would force Nippon Steel to sell its shares in the South Korean joint venture because they still hope to "amicably" settle the matter through negotiations.

Among the four plaintiffs in the Nippon Steel case, only 94-year-old Lee Chun-sik has survived the legal battle, which extended nearly 14 years.

South Korea says Japan used about 220,000 wartime Korean forced laborers before the end of World War II.

Nuns in India tell AP of enduring abuse in Catholic church

KURAVILANGAD, India (AP)—The stories spill out in the sitting rooms of Catholic convents, where portraits of Jesus keep watch and fans spin quietly overhead. They spill out in church meeting halls bathed in fluorescent lights, and over cups of cheap instant coffee in convent kitchens. Always, the stories come haltingly, quietly. Sometimes, the nuns speak at little more than a whisper.

Across India, the nuns talk of priests who pushed into their bedrooms and of priests who pressured them to turn close friendships into sex. They talk about being groped and kissed, of hands pressed against them by men they were raised to believe were representatives of Jesus Christ.

"He was drunk," said one nun, beginning her story. "You don't know how to say no," said another.

At its most grim, the nuns speak of repeated rapes, and of a Catholic hierarchy that did little to protect them.

The Vatican has long been aware of nuns sexually abused by priests and bishops in Asia, Europe, South America and Africa, but it has done very little to stop it, The Associated Press reported last year.

Now, the AP has investigated the situation in a single country—India—and uncovered a decades-long history of nuns enduring sexual abuse from within the church. Nuns described in detail the sexual pressure they endured from priests, and nearly two dozen other people—nuns, former nuns and priests, and others—said they had direct knowledge of such incidents.

Still, the scale of the problem in India remains unclear, cloaked by a powerful culture of silence. Many nuns believe abuse is commonplace, insisting most sisters can at least tell of fending off a priest's sexual advances. Some believe it is rare. Almost none, though, talk about it readily, and most speak only on the condition they not be identified.

But this summer, one Indian nun forced the issue into the open.

When repeated complaints to church officials brought no response, the 44-year-old nun filed a police complaint against the bishop who oversees her religious order, accusing him of raping her 13 times over two years. Soon after, a group of her fellow nuns launched a two-week public protest in India's Catholic heartland, demanding the bishop's arrest.

It was an unprecedented action, dividing India's Catholic community. Inside the accuser's convent in rural Kerala state, she and the nuns who support her are now pariahs, isolated from the other sisters, many of whom insist the bishop is innocent. The protesting nuns get hate mail and avoid going out.

"Some people are accusing us of working against the church, of being against the church. They say, 'You are worshipping Satan,'" said one supporter, Sister Josephine Villoonnickal. "But we need to stand up for the truth."

Villoonnickal has been a nun for 23 years, joining when she was a teenager. She scoffs at the idea that she wants to harm the church.

"We want to die as sisters," she said.

ASIA BRIEFS

Japan emperor greets public in final New Year's appearance

TOKYO (AP)—Japanese Emperor Akihito waved on Wednesday to throngs of well-wishers eager to see his final New Year's appearance before abdicating in several months. "I am truly happy to celebrate the New Year with all of you under such cloudless skies," the 85-year-old emperor told the crowd from a balcony at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo. Akihito has made annual New Year's appearances with his wife, Empress Michiko, and other family members to wish peace for the nation. Japanese media reported that more than 150,000 people attended on Wednesday, a record under Akihito's reign. Many waited from early in the morning and waved Japanese flags when Akihito appeared. Akihito succeeded his father, wartime Emperor Hirohito, in 1989, and will abdicate on April 30, with his elder son, Naruhito, ascending to the Chrysanthemum Throne. Japan's imperial family is far more cloistered than its Western counterparts, and Hirohito was once viewed as a god. Akihito strove to become a more accessible emperor. He was the first in modern history to marry a commoner, courting Michiko on the tennis courts. Both of his sons have married commoners.

Trump says he's ready to meet again with North Korean leader

WASHINGTON (AP)—President Donald Trump said Wednesday that he has received a letter from North Korean leader Kim Jong Un and will be setting up a meeting with Kim "in the not-too-distant future" to restart talks about the North's nuclear programs. "He'd like to meet. I'd like to meet," Trump said as he held up the letter during a Cabinet meeting. Earlier in the day, Trump tweeted: "Kim Jong Un says North Korea will not make or test nuclear weapons, or give them to others—& he is ready to meet President Trump anytime." Kim has met several times with the leader of South Korea and attended a summit in Singapore with Trump in June. Kim has signed vague statements pledging a nuclear-free Korean Peninsula, but has not described how and when that might occur.

World

6 die in Denmark's worst train accident since 1988

COPENHAGEN, Denmark (AP)—Six passengers were killed when a Danish train sustained damage while crossing a bridge that was closed to cars because of high wind Wednesday, and authorities investigated if falling cargo from a freight train caused Denmark's deadliest railway accident in 30 years.

Authorities said the two trains were traveling in opposite directions on the bridge linking s Denmark's islands. Aerial TV footage showed a front side of the passenger train ripped open. Photos showed crates of beer on the freight train and a tarpaulin on top torn in pieces.

Jesper Nielsen told Denmark's TV2 he was riding on the passenger train and it "was out on the bridge when there was a huge 'bang' ... very quickly thereafter, the train braked."

The rail operator, Danish Railways, told Denmark's TV2 the victims were passengers on a train going from the city of Odense, on the central Danish island of Funen, to the capital of Copenhagen when the accident took place about 8 a.m.

Police declined to comment directly on a report from Denmark's TV2 channel that a large freight container had likely fallen off the cargo train.

"It is much too early to speculate as to what might have caused it," chief police investigator Joergen Andersen told reporters. "It has been a pretty serious accident."

The accident, in which 16 people were injured, took place on a road-and-rail bridge, part of the Storebaelt system of bridges and a tunnel that link the Danish islands of Zealand and Funen. The system was closed to cars overnight because of strong winds but trains were allowed to continue using it.

Police spokesman Lars Braemhoej said one possible cause of the "considerable damage" on the passenger train was getting struck by cargo from the freight train, but noted that authorities "do not know precisely what caused the accident."

Kasper Elbjoern, spokesman for the Danish brewery group Carlsberg, confirmed that a freight train transporting its cargo was involved in the accident.

Police urged passengers to contact relatives and tell them if they were safe and urged people not to share photos or videos of the accident.

Flemming Jensen, the CEO of state-owned Danish Railways, said police and the Danish Accident Investigation Board were investigating. He said the operator "will contribute everything that we can to the investigation."

Bo Haaning of the Danish Accident Investigation Board was quoted as saying it could take months before the cause of the accident could be determined.

The government agency responsible for Danish railways said on Twitter that no further trains would cross the Storebaelt link on Wednesday, adding it was aiming to allow train crossings to resume Thursday. Road traffic resumed Wednesday with a 50 kph (31 mph) speed limit.

"Ordinary Danes on their way to work or heading home from the Christmas holidays have had their lives smashed," Prime Minister Lars Loekke Rasmussen said as he issued his condolences.

A view of the freight train, after a train accident on the Great Belt Bridge in Nyborg, Denmark, Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019. AP

Brazil's Bolsonaro targets minorities on 1st day in office

SAO PAULO (AP)—Newly installed President Jair Bolsonaro targeted Brazil's indigenous groups, descendants of slaves and the LGBT community with executive orders in the first hours of his administration, moving quickly after a campaign in which the far-right leader said he would radically overhaul many aspects of life in Latin America's largest nation.

Sao Paulo's stock market, meanwhile, jumped 3.56 percent to a record closing of 91,012 points as new Cabinet ministers reinforced the intent to privatize state-owned companies and a Brazilian arms maker benefited from Bolsonaro's plans to loosen gun controls. Similar spikes in stock prices also occurred during the presidential campaign.

One of the orders issued late Tuesday, hours after Bolsonaro's inauguration, likely will make it all but impossible for new lands to be identified and demarcated for indigenous communities. Areas set aside for "Quilombolas," as descendants of former slaves are known, are also affected by the decision.

Another order removed the concerns of the LGBT community from consideration by the new human rights ministry.

In a move favorable to his allies in agribusiness, which have criticized giving large swaths of lands to the indigenous, Bolsonaro transferred the responsibilities for delineating indigenous territories from the Justice Ministry to the Agriculture Ministry. The new agriculture minister, Tereza Cristina, is part of the agribusiness caucus in Brazil's lower house and has opposed requests from native communities.

Bolsonaro, a former army captain and longtime congressman, said during his presidential campaign that he would stop making what he calls concessions to native Brazilians and Quilombolas.

"Less than one million people live in those places isolated from the real Brazil," he tweeted Wednesday. "They are explored and manipulated by nonprofits. Together we will integrate those citizens and give value to all Brazilians."

The Justice Ministry previously handled demarcation of indigenous lands through the FUNAI agency, which also oversees other initiatives for indigenous groups such as health care, housing and language preservation. Bolsonaro's order is raising uncertainties about FUNAI by shifting it to a new ministry for family, women and human rights that is headed by an ultraconservative evangelical pastor.

Observatorio do Clima, a network of 45 Brazilian civil society groups, criticized the executive orders, calling them "only the first step on meeting Bolsonaro's campaign promises of dismantling environmental governance, stripping indigenous peoples of their rights and opening up indigenous lands for business."

"The attack on FUNAI goes beyond the wildest dreams of the rural caucus, who had tried for years to pass a constitutional amendment transferring the demarcation of indigenous lands from the president to Congress," the nonprofit said. "Bolsonaro solved the problem by transferring them directly to farmers."

The far-right leader said last year that he also wants to annul land demarcation decisions made by previous administrations, but legal experts say recent Brazilian Supreme Court rulings could block such move.

New Health Minister Luiz Henrique Mandetta also suggested on Wednesday that there will be spending cuts in health care for the indigenous.

"We have figures for the general public that are much below what is spent on health care for the indigenous," he said, without providing details.

WORLD BRIEFS

Death toll in Russian apartment collapse rises to 33

MOSCOW (AP)—Search crews in Russia pulled more bodies Wednesday from a huge pile of rubble where part of an apartment building collapsed, bringing the known death toll to 33 and the number of missing residents down to eight as the grim recovery work continued for a third night. A 3-year-old girl was among the latest victims of the collapse in the Russian city of Magnitogorsk, Russian news agencies reported, citing the Russian emergencies ministry. The people found dead since the Monday morning collapse so far include six children. An 11-month-old boy who brought a burst of hope when he was discovered alive Tuesday ,nearly 36 hours after the collapse, was in serious but stable condition at a Moscow children's hospital after traveling about 1,400 kilometers (870 miles) in a plane dispatched by the Russian Health Ministry. Health Minister Veronika Skvortsova said the infant suffered superficial head wounds but no apparent brain damage.

El Salvador murder rate falls, though still among deadliest

SAN SALVADOR, El Salvador (AP)—Homicides in El Salvador have fallen for a third straight year, but the gang-plagued Central American nation remains among the world's deadliest. Police Commissioner Howard Cotto told journalists Wednesday that the murder rate was 50.3 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2018. That's down from 60.8 the previous year and less than half the 103 recorded in 2015, a nadir for violence in the country. Criminologist Ricardo Sosa called three straight years of drops "an important achievement" especially compared to the "scandalous" 2015. But he added that more must be done to improve security. Many Salvadorans who try to migrate to the U.S. cite violence as their motivation. For comparison, the city of Baltimore recorded a murder rate of 56 per 100,000 inhabitants in 2017. Mexico's was around 25 that same year.

Congolese flee to Uganda after vote, raising Ebola fears

KAMPALA, Uganda (AP)—Hundreds of refugees have crossed into Uganda from Congo in the days since that country's troubled presidential election, a Red Cross official said Wednesday, heightening concerns about the possible cross-border spread of Ebola. Separately, the head of the World Health Organization said he has asked the supplier of an experimental vaccine to produce more of it. The refugee influx started the day after Sunday's vote and since then dozens of people have been arriving at a time, said Irene Nakasiita, a spokeswoman for the Red Cross in Uganda. Some Congolese trying to cross the border were forced back after resisting the efforts of Ugandan health officials screening people for Ebola, she said. Congo's government cited the Ebola outbreak in the country's northeast for a contentious decision to bar an estimated 1 million voters from the election. Protests followed, with some people vandalizing Ebola response facilities and some aid groups forced to suspend work for days.

Off The Wall

Kansas teen to get high school, Harvard diplomas in 1 month

ULYSSES, Kan. (AP)—A 16-year-old Kansas boy will soon earn his high school diploma—and a few days later he'll travel to Harvard to collect his bachelor's degree.

Ulysses High School senior Braxton Moral will attend both commencement ceremonies in May, becoming the only student to successfully pursue a four-year high school degree and a bachelor's degree from Harvard at the same time, The Hutchinson News reported .

Harvard has changed the rules, Braxton's father Carlos Moral said, so his son will "the one and only" reaching that milestone. Braxton Moral will be 17 when he gets his diplomas.

Carlos Moral said they began to realize their son was special when he was in the third grade.

"They told us: 'You need to do something. He's not just gifted. He's really, really gifted,'" he said.

Braxton Moral skipped the fourth grade.

The Ulysses school district allowed him to take some high school classes while he was still in middle school. Before high school he took a class offered at Fort Hays State University. Then he was admitted into Harvard.

Braxton Moral simultaneously studied at the high school and the Harvard Extension School. The program typically serves adults who work and can't attend classes on campus full time.

Ulysses High School math teacher Patsy Love served as the proctor for the Harvard program, administering Moral's tests in Kansas. Moral spent the summer before his junior year at Harvard's campus in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

"We constantly are monitoring Braxton to make sure he is not too overwhelmed," said Julie Moral, Braxton Moral's mother. "No achievement is worth him being unhappy."

Braxton Moral is on track to graduate from the Bachelor of Liberal Arts program, with a major government and a minor in English, said Harry Pierre, associate director of communications for Harvard's Division of Continuing Education.

Braxton Moral said he hopes to attend Harvard Law School next.

"Politics is end game for me," he said, though he's still too young to vote.

From duct-taped shoes to $11M: Man leaves surprise donations

SEATTLE (AP)—Alan Naiman was known for an unabashed thriftiness that veered into comical, but even those closest to him had no inkling of the fortune that he quietly amassed and the last act that he had long planned.

The Washington state social worker died of cancer this year at age 63, leaving most of a surprising $11 million estate to children's charities that help the poor, sick, disabled and abandoned. The amount baffled the beneficiaries and his best friends, who are lauding Naiman as the anniversary of his death approaches in January.

That's because the Seattle man patched up his shoes with duct tape, sought deals at the grocery store deli at closing time and took his best friends out to lunch at fast-food joints.

Naiman, who died unmarried and childless, loved kids but also was intensely private, scrimping, investing and working extra jobs to stockpile money that he rarely spent on himself after seeing how unfair life could be for the most vulnerable children, his friends say.

They believe a lifelong devotion to his older brother who had a developmental disability influenced Naiman, though he rarely spoke of it. The brother died in 2013, the same year Naiman splurged on a sports car—a modestly priced Scion FR-S.

"Growing up as a kid with an older, disabled brother kind of colored the way he looked at things," close friend Susan Madsen said.

A former banker, Naiman worked the past two decades at the state Department of Social and Health Services, handling after-hours calls. He earned $67,234 and also took on side gigs, sometimes working as many as three jobs. He saved and invested enough to make several millions of dollars and also inherited millions more from his parents, said Shashi Karan, a friend from his banking days.

Thrilled when he finally qualified for senior discounts, Naiman bought his clothes from the grocery store. He loved cars, but for the most of his life, drove beat-up vehicles and seemed to enjoy the solitude and savings of solo road trips, friends say.

After Naiman's death, Karan realized how little he knew of the other aspects of his longtime friend's life.

"I don't know if he was lonely. I think he was a loner," Karan said.

Many of the organizations benefiting from Naiman's gifts said they didn't know him, though they had crossed paths.

He left $2.5 million to the Pediatric Interim Care Center, a private organization in Washington state that cares for babies born to mothers who abused drugs and helps the children wean off their dependence. The group used some of what was its largest donation ever to pay off a mortgage and buy a new vehicle to transport the 200 babies it accepts from hospitals each year.

Naiman had called the center about a newborn while working for the state more than a decade ago, and its founder, Barbara Drennen, showed up in the middle of the night to get the baby.

"We would never dream that something like this would happen to us. I wish very much that I could have met him. I would have loved to have had him see the babies he's protecting," Drennen said.

NY baby is named after highway where she was born in a car

NEW YORK (AP)—It was my way and the highway for a newborn New Yorker, who's now named after the expressway where she was born in her parents' minivan as they raced to a hospital.

Alie Albarracin arrived around 3 a.m. Wednesday as parents Maria and Ivan Albarracin headed east on the Long Island Expressway from their Queens home to Bellevue Hospital.

Her name is spelled A-L-I-E. The highway's nickname is the "L.I.E."

Her parents tell the New York Post they planned to name their third child Aurora but switched it after the unusual birth.

Realizing they wouldn't make it to the hospital, the Albarracins pulled over by the Queens Midtown Tunnel and asked Metropolitan Transportation Authority officers for help. They got it from Lt. Harry Persad, who has emergency medical technician experience.

Science & Technology

Official says Russian weapon 27 times faster than speed of sound

MOSCOW (AP)—Russia's new strategic weapon has rendered any missile defenses useless at a small fraction of their cost, officials said Thursday.

The Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle flies 27 times faster than the speed of sound, making it impossible to intercept, Deputy Prime Minister Yuri Borisov told Russian state television.

The new weapon "essentially makes missile defenses useless," he said.

Borisov spoke a day after Russian President Vladimir Putin oversaw what he described as the conclusive successful test of the Avangard and hailed it as a reliable guarantee of Russia's security for decades to come.

In Wednesday's test, the weapon was launched from the Dombarovskiy missile base in the southern Ural Mountains. The Kremlin said it successfully hit a practice target on the Kura shooting range on Kamchatka, 6,000 kilometers (3,700 miles) away.

AP

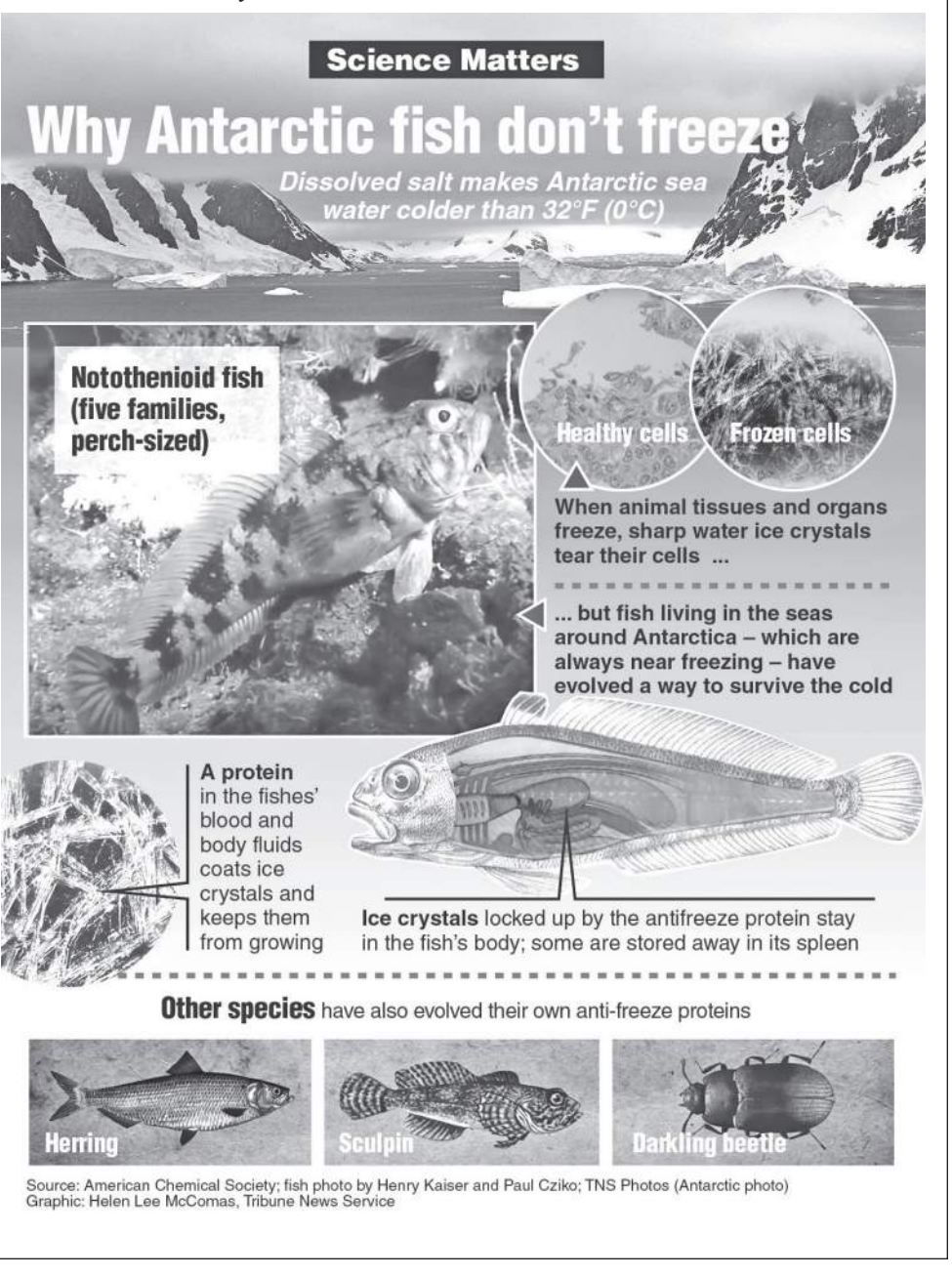
Russian Defense Minister Sergei Shoigu, left, Russian President Vladimir Putin, center, Chief of General Staff of Russia Valery Gerasimov, background center, and special representative on questions of ecology and transport, Sergei Ivanov, right, talk to each other as they come to oversee the test launch of the Avangard hypersonic glide vehicle from the Defense Ministry's control room in Moscow, Russia, Wednesday, Dec. 26, 2018.

The Defense Ministry released footage from the test launch, in which a ballistic missile could be seen blasting from a silo in a cloud of smoke, but it hasn't released any images of the vehicle itself.

Putin said the Avangard will enter service with the Russian Strategic Missile Forces next year.

The test comes amid bitter tensions in Russia-U.S. relations, which have been strained over the Ukrainian crisis, the war in Syria and the allegations of Moscow's meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

Sergei Ivanov, a former Russian defense minister, said in televised comments that the Avangard constantly changes its course and altitude as it flies through the atmosphere.


Science Matters
Why Antarctic fish don't freeze
Dissolved salt makes Antarctic sea water colder than 32°F (0°C)
Notothenioid fish (five families, perch-sized)
Healthy cells
Frozen cells
When animal tissues and organs freeze, sharp water ice crystals tear their cells ...
... but fish living in the seas around Antarctica – which are always near freezing – have evolved a way to survive the cold
A protein in the fishes' blood and body fluids coats ice crystals and keeps them from growing
Ice crystals locked up by the antifreeze protein stay in the fish's body; some are stored away in its spleen
Other species have also evolved their own anti-freeze proteins
Herring
Sculpin
Darkling beetle

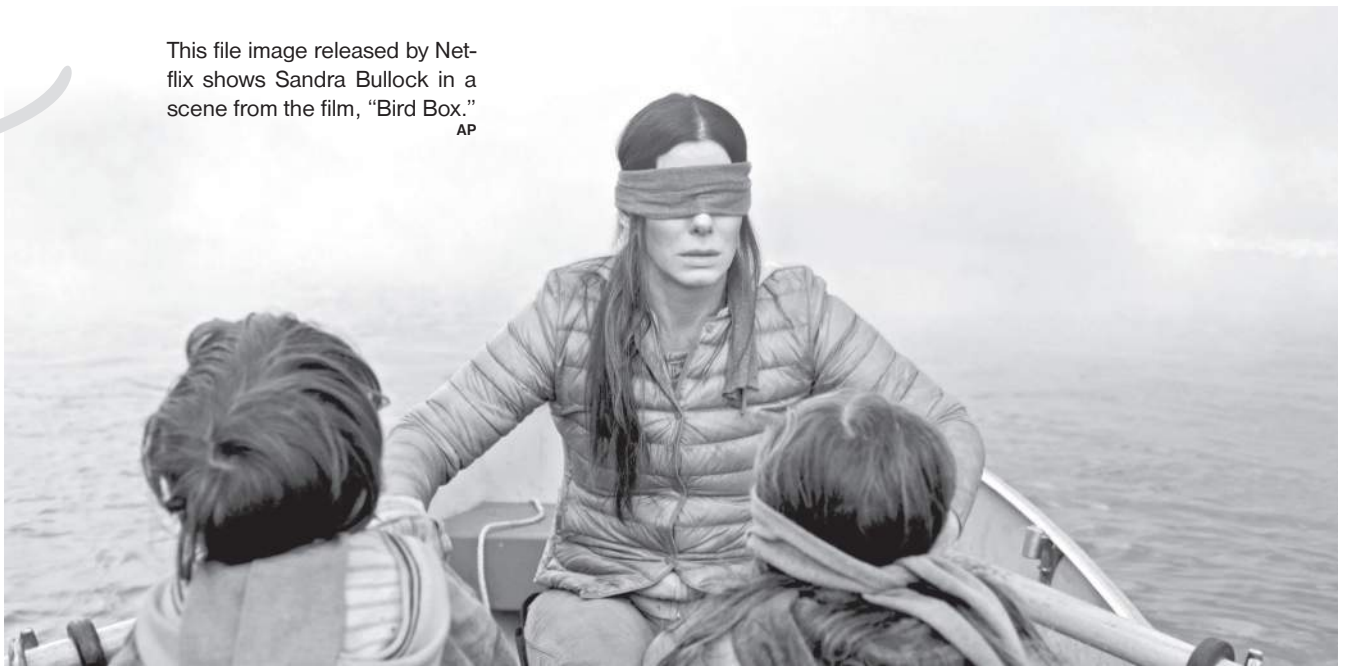
Source: American Chemical Society; fish photo by Henry Kaiser and Paul Cziko; TNS Photos (Antarctic photo)
Graphic: Helen Lee McComas, Tribune News Service

Life & Style

Netflix's 'Bird Box' success gets Hollywood clucking

SAN FRANCISCO (AP)—Netflix said 45 million subscriber accounts worldwide watched the Sandra Bullock thriller "Bird Box" during its first seven days on the service, the biggest first-week success of any movie made for the company's nearly 12-year-old streaming service.

Netflix, which typically refuses to provide viewership numbers, made the rare disclosure in a recent tweet as movie producers, writers, actors and investors continue to size up a company that has already reshaped the way the world watches video.



This file image released by Netflix shows Sandra Bullock in a scene from the film, "Bird Box." AP

The first-week audience means nearly one-third of Netflix's 137 million subscribers watched the movie from Dec. 21 through Dec. 27—a holiday-season stretch when many people aren't working and have more free time. Had 45 million people actually gone to a theater in the U.S. to watch "Bird Box," it would have translated to about $400 million in box-office revenue, based on average ticket prices.

But people were watching the movie on a service for which they already had paid and had the luxury of doing so without leaving their homes. That makes watching "Bird Box" more comparable to watching a television program, Wedbush Securities analyst Michael Pachter said.

By that yardstick, the viewership for "Bird Box" is less impressive. For instance, the Super Bowl typically attracts 100 million to 110 million viewers in the U.S. alone. The annual telecast of the Academy Awards has drawn a U.S. audience of 26 million to 40 million in recent years. And those totals are for a single day, not a week.

Television viewership and theatrical box-office numbers are typically calculated by third-party firms, unlike the "Bird Box" figure released by Netflix. The Los Gatos, California, company has steadfastly refused to divulge its viewership because it regards the data as a competitive advantage in deciding what programs will attract subscribers. All Netflix will say about its "Bird Box" number is that it counted only accounts that watched at least 70 percent of the movie. Multiple viewers sharing a single account are counted once.

Netflix so far has made its biggest splash with highly acclaimed TV series such as "House of Cards," "Stranger Things," and "The Crown." "Bird Box" is the latest example of the company's resolve to become a bigger player in movies, too.

To pull it off, Netflix is borrowing billions of dollars to pay for original movies and TV series. But beyond money, Netflix needs to appease directors and actors who want their work to also be seen in movie theaters, both for their larger screens and for award consideration. That's why Netflix has been arranging for films like "Bird Box," "Roma," and "The Ballad of Buster Scruggs" to have limited runs in theaters first.

That's a strategy that Amazon had already been following, enabling its "Manchester By The Sea" to win Academy Awards for best actor and original screenplay in 2017. An ESPN documentary, "O.J.: Made In America," also won an Oscar in 2017 after appearing in theaters before its debut on the TV network.

By breaking tradition and disclosing viewership numbers for "Bird Box," Netflix cleverly created even more buzz, Pachter said. "They are masters at getting attention and they knew revealing the numbers would get the media to write about it," he said.

Box office records break as Broadway says goodbye to 2018

NEW YORK (AP)—Broadway producers had plenty of reasons to pop the bubbly as 2018 wound down, with many shows recording their most profitable weeks despite some eye-popping ticket prices.

Eight shows last week earned more than $2 million for the week ending Dec. 30, led by "Hamilton," "The Lion King" and "Wicked," according to the Broadway League, a national trade association for the industry. "Hamilton" crossed the $4 million mark for the week, with an average ticket costing $375.39.

The year ended with the best attended and highest grossing week on record. Grosses soared to $57.8 million for the week, attracting 378,910 patrons. By way of comparison, the year 2017 ended with grosses at $35.8 million and 244,973 patrons.

New weekly highs were reached by shows including "Mean Girls," which earned $1.9 million over eight shows, and "The Ferryman," which pulled in just over $1 million over eight performances. Even the musical "Chicago" got into the act at the mature age of 22, earning $1.2 million.

There was dueling hype for two play properties: The two-part "Harry Potter and the Cursed Child" set a new Broadway record for weekly ticket sales for a play, reporting a gross of over $2.5 million for eight shows. But not far away, "To Kill a Mockingbird" brought in $1.7 million over eight shows, making it the highest single-week grossing American play in Broadway history.

New Year's Eve television viewership takes a dip

NEW YORK (AP)—Television ratings for New Year's Eve celebrations took a tumble this year—and you can probably partly blame the weather.

Contrary to what the soggy celebrants in New York's Times Square might think, it is because of good weather. Last year's ABC's "New Year's Rockin' Eve" had its biggest audience since at least 1991 with much of the country locked in a deep freeze and potential partygoers wanting to stay home and keep warm.

This year, viewership for ABC's prime-time New Year's show with Ryan Seacrest averaged 9.1 million people, down 26 percent from last year's 12.3 million, the Nielsen company said. Fox's prime-time show with Steve Harvey was down 47 percent to 3.1 million people, although last year's numbers were inflated because Harvey came on directly after an NFL game.

Nielsen did not immediately have viewership numbers for late-night coverage when the ball dropped at midnight to signify the arrival of 2019. But in a preliminary sampling of the nation's largest television markets showed similar declines to earlier in the evening. ABC's late-night coverage was down 27 percent from the previous year, while Fox was down 22 percent, Nielsen said.

NBC's prime-time New Year's Eve program with Carson Daly and Chrissy Teigen was seen by 4.8 million people. The network didn't have similar programming last year.

Sports dominated an otherwise quiet week in television, with ESPN's prime-time ratings topping all of the broadcast networks. The college football playoff semifinals were the most popular programs, led by the 18.5 million people who watched Alabama beat Oklahoma.

Kyle Simmons, from left, Dan Smith, Chris Wood and Will Farquarson of Bastille performs at the New Year's Eve celebration in Times Square on Monday, Dec. 31, 2018, in New York. AP

For the week, NBC averaged 5.2 million viewers in prime time. CBS had 4.6 million, ABC had 3.2 million, Fox had 2.9 million, ION Television had 1.3 million, Univision had 1.1 million, Telemundo had 960,000 and the CW had 680,000.

ESPN's audience topped all of the broadcast and cable networks, with a 5.73 prime time average. The other top cable networks were Hallmark with 1.95 million, USA with 1.28 million, Fox News Channel with 1.24 million and HGTV with 1.18 million.

ABC's "World News Tonight" topped the evening newscasts with an average of 8.8 million viewers. NBC's "Nightly News" had 8 million and the "CBS Evening News" had 6 million.

Netflix criticized for yanking comedian's episode in Saudi

NEW YORK (AP)—Netflix faced criticism Wednesday from human rights groups for pulling an episode in Saudi Arabia of comedian Hasan Minhaj's "Patriot Act" series that criticized the kingdom's powerful crown prince.

The American comedian used his second episode, released Oct. 28, to criticize Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman over the killing of writer Jamal Khashoggi and the Saudi-led coalition at war in Yemen.

Human rights group Amnesty International said Saudi Arabia's censorship of Netflix is "further proof of a relentless crackdown on freedom of expression." PEN America, the literary and human rights organization, said the move "legitimizes repression." Netflix said it was simply complying with a local law.

Khashoggi, who wrote critically of the crown prince in columns for the newspaper, was killed and dismembered by Saudi agents inside the Saudi consulate in Istanbul last year. The U.S. Senate has said it believes the crown prince is responsible for the grisly killing, despite insistence by the kingdom that he had no knowledge of the operation.

"It blows my mind that it took the killing of a Washington Post journalist for everyone to go: 'Oh I guess he's not really a reformer,'" Minhaj said in the episode.

Netflix, in a statement Wednesday, said the episode was removed from the kingdom as a result of a legal request from authorities and not due to its content.

"We strongly support artistic freedom worldwide and removed this episode only in Saudi Arabia after we had received a valid legal demand from the government—and to comply with local law," the streaming giant said.

US, Israel exit UN cultural agency, claiming bias

PARIS (AP)—The United States and Israel officially quit the U.N.'s educational, scientific and cultural agency at the stroke of midnight, the culmination of a process triggered more than a year ago amid concerns that the organization fosters anti-Israel bias.

The withdrawal is mainly procedural yet serves a new blow to UNESCO, co-founded by the U.S. after World War II to foster peace.

The Trump administration filed its notice to withdraw in October 2017 and Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu followed suit.

The Paris-based organization has been denounced by its critics as a crucible for anti-Israel bias: blasted for criticizing Israel's occupation of east Jerusalem, naming ancient Jewish sites as Palestinian heritage sites and granting full membership to Palestine in 2011.

Israeli U.N. envoy Danny Danon said Tuesday that his country "will not be a member of an organization whose goal is to deliberately act against us, and that has become a tool manipulated by Israel's enemies."

The U.S. has demanded "fundamental reform" in the agency that is best known for its World Heritage program to protect cultural sites and traditions. UNESCO also works to improve education for girls, promote understanding of the Holocaust's horrors, and to defend media freedom.

The withdrawals will not greatly impact UNESCO financially, since it has been dealing with a funding slash ever since 2011, when both Israel and the U.S. stopped paying dues after Palestine was voted in as a member state. Since then officials estimate that the U.S.—which accounted for around 22 percent of the total budget—has accrued $600 million in unpaid dues, which was one of the reasons for President Donald Trump's decision to withdraw. Israel owes an estimated $10 million.

UNESCO Director General Audrey Azoulay took up her post just after Trump announced the pullout. Azoulay, who has Jewish and Moroccan heritage, has presided over the launch of a Holocaust education website and the U.N.'s first educational guidelines on fighting anti-Semitism—initiatives that might be seen as responding to U.S. and Israeli concerns.

Officials say that many of the reasons the U.S. cited for withdrawal do not apply anymore, noting that since then, all 12 texts on the Middle East passed at UNESCO have been consensual among Israel and Arab member states.

In April, Israel's ambassador to UNESCO said the mood was "like a wedding" after member nations signed off on a rare compromise resolution on "Occupied Palestine," and UNESCO diplomats hailed a possible breakthrough on long-standing Israeli-Arab tensions.

The document was still quite critical of Israel, however, and the efforts weren't enough to encourage the U.S. and Israel to reconsider their decision to quit.

In recent years, Israel has been infuriated by repeated resolutions that ignore and diminish its historical connection to the Holy Land and that have named ancient Jewish sites as Palestinian heritage sites.

AN ADDITION TO THE FAMILY AP

In this Monday, Sept. 17, 2018, file photo, Jwan Yosef, left, and Ricky Martin arrive at the 70th Primetime Emmy Awards at the Microsoft Theater in Los Angeles. Martin announced the arrival of his daughter with an Instagram post showing off the infant's tiny hands. Martin says he and his artist husband Jwan Yosef have named the girl Lucia.

Grande, Gambino among Coachella headliners

LOS ANGELES (AP)—The organizers of the 2019 Coachella Valley Music and Arts Festival have announced the top acts scheduled to appear at the multiday event in April.

Goldenvoice, the promoter of the event, said Wednesday night that the big names scheduled to perform at the two-weekend event in Southern California from April 12 to April 14 and from April 19 to April 21 include Ariana Grande, Childish Gambino, Tame Impala and Janelle Monae. Other performers booked to play at the event include the 1975, DJ Snake, Diplo, Solange and Weezer.

In 2018, Grande capped off a successful year as a pop star that included another No. 1 album with "Sweetener" as well as multiple hits, from "No Tears Left to Cry" to "God Is a Woman" to "Breathin."

Coachella is known as the festival for cool kids—and musicians. Tickets go on sale on Friday.

LA police make arrest in burglaries of Hollywood Hills homes

LOS ANGELES (AP)—A man who allegedly burglarized millions of dollars worth of property from Hollywood Hills homes of celebrities and others has been arrested, Los Angeles police said Wednesday.

Investigators found more than 2,000 suspected stolen items when search warrants were served on the home of Benjamin Eitan Ackerman, 32, and a storage unit, Detective Jared Timmons said.

Entertainers such as Usher, Adam Lambert and Jason Derulo were among 13 victims identified so far, Timmons said.

Police posted photos of items on a website in hope of identifying other victims and returning property to them. Timmons said the estimated combined value of the items was at several million dollars.

The items stolen in 2017 and 2018 include artwork, jewelry, fine wines, purses and clothing, said Capt. Cory Palka, commander of the LAPD's Hollywood Division.

Authorities alleged Ackerman cased homes while pretending to be a potential buyer or real estate agent at open houses. Police said he also sometimes falsely claimed to work for an investment firm.

"When he showed up he was dressed to the nines. He acted the part. He was very slick," Timmons said.

No one challenged him or sought to verify who he was, the detective said.

Carrie Ann Inaba gets host gig on 'The Talk'

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Carrie Ann Inaba is no longer a temp on "The Talk."

The CBS daytime show announced Wednesday that Inaba has joined the panel of hosts, moving up from recurring guest host.

"The Dancing With the Stars" judge replaces Julie Chen, who left the talk show in September.

Chen's departure came a week after her husband, CBS Corp. boss Leslie Moonves, was ousted from the company due to sexual misconduct allegations.

In announcing her exit on-air, Chen appeared to endorse Inaba as her successor.

Inaba, who has served as guest host on "The Talk" for two seasons, joins hosts Sara Gilbert, Sheryl Underwood, Sharon Osbourne and Eve.

Inaba's career in dance includes performing on Madonna's "The Girlie Show World Tour." She's also an actress and singer.

Drug user battling addiction offers words of hope to others

DEAR ABBY: I'm currently in a mental hospital. I have been in and out for years because of suicide attempts and drug use. My drug of choice is crystal meth, and it has been a vicious cycle.

I'm 19 and will be 20 soon. I would like to share my story with your readers, young and old, who may feel lost or alone. I was sexually abused and have prostituted myself for drugs when I was desperate. I'm going through intensive treatment now. When I was at my lowest, my family looked the other way.

What I want to tell people is to get help if they are contemplating suicide. I want them to know their lives are valuable. I struggle with hallucinations, and it's scary at times. But no matter what we go through in life, we must remember that we were built to be resilient. I believe in our strength. Thanks, Abby.

OVERCOMING IN WISCONSIN

DEAR OVERCOMING: I believe in your strength as well, and I'm glad that you are getting treatment. Recovery from addiction can be a daily challenge, which takes courage and determination. You appear to have both.

I am printing your letter because it carries an important message for anyone who is feeling suicidal. The phone number of the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline is 800-273-8255, and it is toll-free.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: I work in close quarters with two women. They often talk politics, and I am very aware of their views. They asked me if I was voting in the midterms, and I answered in the affirmative, but offered no details as my vote is my personal business.

Since then, I have been told, "You are part of the problem." "People like you ..." and, "It must be nice to not care." I don't know how to respond to these hurtful comments, which make me feel terrible. It makes me extremely uncomfortable, and I don't think it's appropriate to discuss this at work in the first place.

I am not sure how to handle this if it continues. I don't want these women to hate me. I respect them, but this is a sensitive topic.

NOT THE PLACE

DEAR NOT THE PLACE: I agree that, for the most part, discussing politics in the workplace is inappropriate because there are bound to be disagreements, which are not conducive to a pleasant environment. Hopefully, now that the midterms are behind us, the hostility will die down—at least for a while.

If it persists, TELL your co-workers that what they are doing is hurtful and you want them to stop. And if they don't, then discuss it with your supervisor or employer because what they are doing is creating a hostile working environment.

■ ■ ■ ■

DEAR ABBY: A friend of mine is a pretty fair oil painter. She occasionally sells one. I would like to buy a painting she recently finished. She quoted me a price, but phrased it as a question, "Does $-- sound OK?" Would it be rude if I offered her less than that for the painting?

BETTER OFFER IN THE WEST

DEAR BETTER OFFER: No, it would not be rude. It's common for buyers to negotiate the price of art objects. It is done all the time, and she shouldn't take offense if you offer her what you think is a fair price. Remember, if she doesn't agree, she can make a counteroffer.

DEAR ABBY
By ABIGAIL VAN BUREN
FROM UNIVERSAL PRESS SYNDICATE

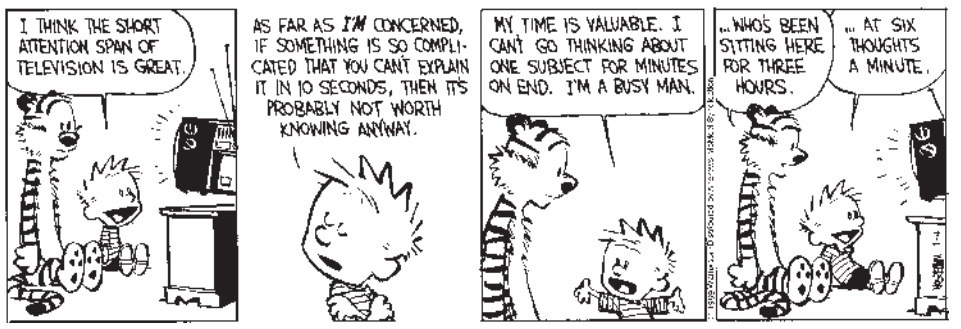
Dear Abby is written by Abigail Van Buren, also known as Jeanne Phillips, and was founded by her mother, Pauline Phillips. Contact Dear Abby at www.DearAbby.com or P.O. Box 69440, Los Angeles, CA 90069.

To receive a collection of Abby's most memorable—and most frequently requested—poems and essays, send your name and mailing address, plus check or money order for $8 (U.S. funds) to: Dear Abby—Keepers Booklet, P.O. Box 447, Mount Morris, IL 61054-0447. Shipping and handling are included in the price.

Pastimes

Calvin and Hobbes

By Bill Waterson


I THINK THE SHORT ATTENTION SPAN OF TELEVISION IS GREAT.
AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IF SOMETHING IS SO COMPLICATED THAT YOU CAN'T EXPLAIN IT IN 10 SECONDS, THEN IT'S PROBABLY NOT WORTH KNOWING ANYWAY.
MY TIME IS VALUABLE. I CAN'T GO THINKING ABOUT ONE SUBJECT FOR MINUTES ON END. I'M A BUSY MAN.
...WHO'S BEEN SITTING HERE FOR THREE HOURS.
...AT SIX THOUGHTS A MINUTE.

Garfield®

By Jim Davis

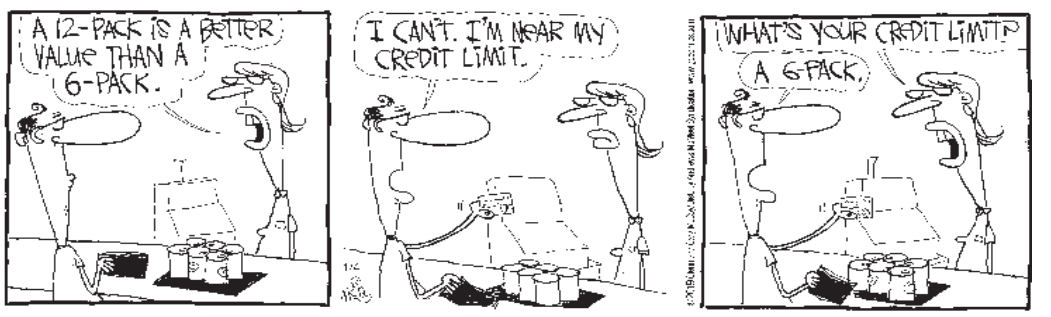
Adam@home

By Bryan Basset

WHAT'S WITH ALL THE WATER?
I'M HYDRATING.
IT'S PART OF ME BEING HEALTHY. IT KEEPS ME FULL AND IT'S GOOD FOR MY ORGANS.
NOT TO MENTION THE STEPS.
STEPS?
I'VE RUN TO THE BATHROOM SIX TIMES IN THE LAST TEN MINUTES.

The Duplex

By Glenn McCoy



CROSSWORD

By Eugene Sheffer

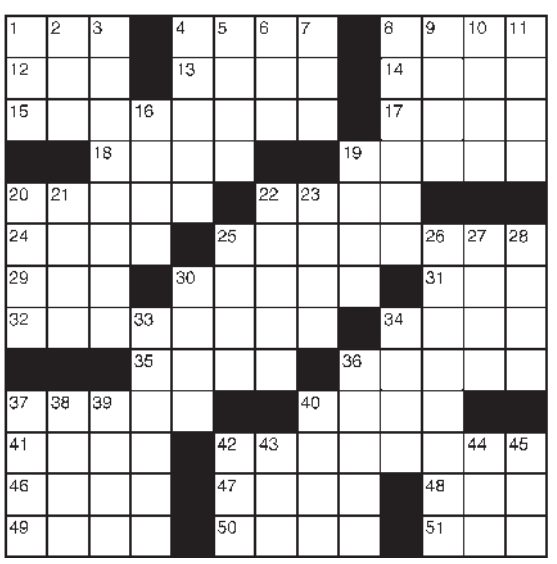
ACROSS
1 Atlas page
4 Act of faith?
8 TV's "Warrior Princess"
12 Oklahoma city
13 Operatic solo
14 Sick as —
15 Newscast opener
17 Cathedral area
18 Vittles
19 Half of a '60s group
20 Sad song
22 Begged
24 Early Peruvian
25 Taylor Swift's genre, say
29 R-V link
30 Beetle Bailey's boss
31 As well
32 Bargain for leniency
34 Felines
35 Fail to see
36 Island porch
37 Neptune's realm
40 Ride the waves
41 Actress Cameron
42 Cowboy Cassidy
46 Challenge
47 Matty of baseball
48 Old Olds
49 Auctioneer's cry
50 Citi Field team
51 Society newbie

DOWN
1 Yoga pad
2 Hubbub
3 Drink-to-go holder
4 Coffee bar offering
5 Cupid's alias
6 Tire filler
7 Salary
8 Idyllic place
9 Dutch cheese
10 Bright star
11 Mellows
16 Long tale
19 Viral Web phenomenon
20 Platter
21 Division word
22 Sweat outlets
23 Women's links org.
25 Buddies
26 Silicon Valley school
27 Teeny bit
28 Mozart's "— fan tutte"
30 Whirl
33 Stunned
34 Sagan or Sandburg
36 Waikiki wingdings
37 Probability
38 Pisa farewell
39 British noble
40 Espy
42 Deli meat
43 Flamenco cheer
44 Born abroad?
45 Sailor

Solution time: 25 mins.

P	O	E	M		T	I	C		J	E	A	N
A	N	T	I		C	R	O		E	R	N	E
R	E	A	M		M	A	N		E	A	S	I
A	S	L	O	P	E		S	U	P	S		
			S	A	I	L	O	R	S	J	I	T
N	A	T	A	L		A	R	I		R	D	A
E	V	E	S		S	G	T		N	E	E	D
R	F	I		S	J	F		W		S	F	S
H	H	E	S	H	H	U	I					
		C	H	E	F		N	E	W	B	I	E
B	E	A	U		I	N	C			R	O	N
E	F	S	T		C	F	U			I	T	O
T	A	T	S		C	A	T			S	A	S

Yesterday's answer 1-4



STUMPED? For answers to today's crossword, call **1-900-226-5955**! 99¢ per minute, touch-tone/rotary phones. (18+ only.) A King Features service, NYC.

CELEBRITIES BORN ON THIS DAY: Graham Elliot, 42; Dave Foley, 56; Michael Stipe, 59; Patty Loveless, 62.

Happy Birthday: Don't hide your true feelings. If you don't address what's wrong, you'll keep spinning your wheels, accomplishing little. Turn this into a year to revise what isn't working for you and building a strong base that will house your future dreams. Initiate change instead of letting others dictate the way things will unfold. Be your own representative. Your numbers are 3, 12, 19, 27, 36, 43, 48.

ARIES (*March 21-April 19*): Sensitive issues should be dealt with intelligently. Don't let anger take over when patience is required. Look for positive ways to share information and bring about changes that will benefit you as well as those you love. ✪✪✪✪✪

TAURUS (*April 20-May 20*): Make your dreams come true by setting your sights on what you want and putting in the effort to make it happen. Stamina and determination will help you complete your mission. What you learn will be a game changer. ✪✪✪

GEMINI (*May 21-June 20*): Keep your life simple by sticking to the truth and living moderately. Think matters through to come up with a financial plan that will help you save for something special. Personal improvement should be a priority. ✪✪✪

CANCER (*June 21-July 22*): Share your thoughts and feelings with people who can offer you worthwhile suggestions. With a little imagination, you will come up with a plan that will improve your relationships at work and at home. Romance is in the stars. ✪✪✪

LEO (*July 23-Aug. 22*): Embrace change with open arms and an open mind. What you discover while going through a transformation will help you come to terms with situations that have been hanging over you emotionally. Focus on the present, and let the past go. ✪✪✪

VIRGO (*Aug. 23-Sept. 22*): Network and socialize, and you'll discover new people and interests that will open your eyes to a big, bright future. Let your objectives be personal growth, learning and applying what you know to future endeavors. Make a commitment to someone you love. ✪✪✪✪

LIBRA (*Sept. 23-Oct. 22*): Ease into whatever you do. Now is not the time to make a fuss at home or at work. Listen and assess the situation. Your best recourse is to formulate a plan that will give you something to fall back on. ✪✪

SCORPIO (*Oct. 23-Nov. 21*): Look at the possibilities and focus on what you can do. Don't try to fight a losing battle. Use your head to come up with a way to micromanage a tough situation. Someone close to you will step up and help. ✪✪✪

SAGITTARIUS (*Nov. 22-Dec. 21*): A lifestyle change or making improvements at home will boost your morale as long as you don't go over budget. You'll see a situation differently if you observe the way everyone around you handles the changes taking place. ✪✪✪

EUGENIA LAST

THE LAST WORD IN ASTROLOGY

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CAPRICORN (*Dec. 22-Jan. 19*): Be secretive about the changes you want to make until you have everything in place, and you'll avoid interference that can set you back and ruin your plans. Precision will help you move forward without a hitch. ✪✪✪

AQUARIUS (*Jan. 20-Feb. 18*): If you ask for help, you will receive it. Sharing your feelings with someone you love will bring you closer together. A change to the way you handle your money will bring positive results. An offer should be considered. ✪✪✪✪

PISCES (*Feb. 19-March 20*): Be part of something you believe in. Taking a step in a different direction will be eye-opening. A romantic gesture will help bring you closer to someone you love. Make health a priority. Proper diet and a fitness routine are favored. ✪✪

Birthday Baby: You are independent, reliable and insightful. You are encouraging and steadfast.

*To submit astrological questions to the "**Dear Eugenia**" column, visit **Eugenialast.com**, or join Eugenia on **Twitter/Facebook/LinkedIn.***

SUDOKU

Conceptis Sudoku *By Dave Green*

	6			2				4
	8				4			7
						9		6
			7				9	
6			4		1			5
	7				3			
7		3						
1			9				5	
5				8			7	

Difficulty Level ★★★★ 1/02

Sudoku is a number-placing puzzle based on a 9x9 grid with several given numbers. The object is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the same number only once. The difficulty level of the Conceptis Sudoku increases from Monday to Saturday.

Yesterday's SUDOKU Answer

6	9	2	3	4	8	5	7	1
5	8	7	1	6	2	4	3	9
3	1	4	9	5	7	8	2	6
4	7	8	6	9	5	2	1	3
2	5	6	8	3	1	9	4	7
1	3	9	7	2	4	6	8	5
7	2	1	5	8	9	3	6	4
9	4	3	2	7	6	1	5	8
8	6	5	4	1	3	7	9	2

Difficulty Level ★★★ 182

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WONDERWORD®

By DAVID OUELLET

HOW TO PLAY: All the words listed below appear in the puzzle — horizontally, vertically, diagonally and even backward. Find them, circle each letter of the word and strike it off the list. The leftover letters spell the WONDERWORD.

TGIF — Solution: 7 letters

E	S	D	N	E	I	R	F	A	M	I	L	Y	G	G
X	N	Y	E	X	P	R	E	S	S	I	O	N	N	N
C	A	T	L	E	U	Q	I	L	C	L	H	A	I	I
I	L	C	E	L	E	B	R	A	T	E	A	S	R	D
T	P	L	H	R	A	Y	A	D	I	R	F	S	E	N
E	S	A	T	I	T	N	A	B	I	N	G	O	H	E
M	T	H	J	R	L	A	I	D	A	H	N	U	T	K
E	R	A	A	A	E	L	I	F	Y	R	O	T	A	E
N	E	P	Ⓓ	C	M	C	O	N	O	A	S	I	G	E
T	S	P	Ⓛ	R	A	A	N	U	M	M	P	N	L	W
R	S	I	Ⓘ	O	R	S	S	O	T	E	I	G	A	Y
E	F	N	Ⓦ	N	T	U	T	A	C	C	N	L	I	O
A	R	E	O	Y	I	A	E	U	N	E	V	T	C	J
T	E	S	R	M	N	L	V	A	C	A	T	I	O	N
S	E	S	K	N	I	R	D	W	O	R	C	G	S	E

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Acronym, Bars, Bingo, Casual, Celebrate, Chill Out, Clique, Concert, Crowd, Dancing, Drinks, Ending, Enjoy, Entertainment, Excitement, Expression, Family, Finally, Friday, Friends, Gathering, Happiness, Limo, Martini, Outing, Pajamas, Party, Payday, Plans, Salsa, Sleep, Social, Song, Stress-free, Treats, Vacation, Venue, Weekend, Wild, Work

Yesterday's Answer: Blankets

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Giants GM not committing to Eli for 2019 season

EAST RUTHERFORD, N.J.—Giants general manager Dave Gettleman certainly did not commit to Eli Manning as the team's starting quarterback for 2019 and beyond.

What Gettleman also did not do is say farewell to Manning, who has essentially held a firm grip on the job for the last 15 seasons.

That's just it with what Gettleman told a room full of reporters inside the Giants' auditorium during his season-ending news conference Wednesday: he left the door open to any and all possibilities, and not just with Manning, but just about everything else as the 67-year-old executive continues on his quest to return the franchise to its winning ways.

The Giants finished 5-11, the fourth time in the last five seasons they had double-digit losses. When Gettleman and head coach Pat Shurmur took over a year ago, they promised to own the 3-13 campaign, even though Jerry Reese and Ben McAdoo - fired in December 2017 - were responsible for the losing that came before their arrival.

What the Giants have been since then—well, that's on Gettleman, Shurmur and the rest who are still here, still promising to turn this team around.

"I always hate the word rebuild. I don't ever like it," Gettleman said Wednesday. "You just keep going, you just keep building. That's really what we're doing here. We're doing our best to accumulate the talent that fits our schemes and understands how to play the game. That's what it really is about. And we're going to continue and get it right. We're gonna fix it. We're gonna fix it."

More: NFL mock draft 2019: Where does top QB Dwayne Haskins land in first round?

Here are five takeaways on the issues Gettleman addressed:

Manning met with Gettleman on Monday and the two shared a "no holds barred" and what the latter referred to as "a very honest and upfront conversation," presumably about the direction the Giants will head at the position moving forward.

Now, here's the thing: Gettleman later revealed in the news conference that it was Manning who requested the meeting—"It wasn't like he was called to the principal's office"—and the GM obliged.

"He took me in the low post one on one," Gettleman said, adding: "I'll keep what was said private between he and I. In terms of any question you're gonna ask me today, OK, just so you understand, we will do what's in the best interest of the New York football Giants. That's the way we've operated since I walked in the door and that's the way we will continue to operate. What we're trying to do here is build sustained success. That takes some brutal honesty and it takes some tough decisions."

AP

New York Giants quarterback Eli Manning prepares to throw during the first half of an NFL football game against the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, Sunday, Nov. 18, 2018, in East Rutherford, N.J.

Given the chance to commit to saying Manning would be the Giants quarterback in 2019, Gettleman refused to offer any substantial clarity either way.

"Here's what I'm committed to do: I'm committed to making the best decision in the interest of the New York football Giants," Gettleman added. "That's what I'm committed to do. We're in the evaluation process. I know you guys want answers now but quite frankly I didn't come in yesterday. I've got to do what I do, which is get in my office and watch film. We will meet this week with the coaches and get their evaluations, we'll meet next week with pro personnel to get their evaluation, get their feelings on everything. That's our schedule. I will be watching film for the next who knows how long until my eyes bleed. That's what I do. My commitment is to make this team the best team it can be. If that happens to have Eli playing quarterback, it does."

The fact that Manning wanted to talk to Gettleman Monday and essentially called the meeting is reason to believe that there will be an ongoing exchange here of opinions.

It's not just the Giants evaluating Manning. After 15 seasons, it's very likely that Manning is evaluating the Giants and just how close they are to winning again.

Here's what Archie Manning, Eli's father, told ESPN after Sunday's 36-35 loss to the Cowboys: "If Eli is done playing, I'm fine with it. But if he comes back, the Giants have got to win. They can't go through another season like this."

Gettleman bristled when a reporter asked if he understood Archie Manning's point, saying: "No. Because Archie didn't tell me."

Gettleman was clear that he believes Manning can still play to some extent, insisting that the two-time Super Bowl MVP quarterback who turns 38 on Thursday can still make all the throws. It's also pretty clear the Giants are weighing their options, as is Manning, considering the $23.3 million he is scheduled to make in the final year of his contract, the possibility that the team may look to restructure the deal to create salary cap space and the prospects that Gettleman brought up "sustained success"—which speaks to more than just a one-year commitment at the quarterback position.

What happens next remains uncertain, but if the Giants are committed to exploring all options at quarterback - those include Manning for another year, a 2019 draft pick or a veteran free agent—it's safe to say will be very interesting.

Meanwhile, Gettleman was as emphatic as he can be regarding speculation that the Giants may look to move on from star wide receiver Odell Beckham Jr.

"We didn't sign him to trade him, if that's what you're asking," Gettleman said of Beckham, who finished with 77 catches for 1,052 yards and six touchdowns before missing the last four games of the season with a quad injury suffered when he was leg-whipped on the final play against the Eagles.

Beckham signed a five-year extension worth up to $95 million with $60 million guaranteed in September.

When a reporter followed up asking whether that meant Beckham would be with the Giants in 2019, Gettleman quipped: "You heard what I said."

Could things change? Of course. The NFL is like that. But the Giants are a better team with Beckham than without him, and they believe that.

Eagles back in familiar role as playoff underdogs

PHILADELPHIA (AP)—The Philadelphia Eagles are back in a familiar role with a different disguise.

The defending Super Bowl champions traded in the dog masks for ski masks, but they're still playoff underdogs for the second straight year.

Their road is much tougher this time around, however.

The Eagles (9-7) are trying to become only the third No. 6 seed to win it all, joining the 2005 Pittsburgh Steelers and 2010 Green Bay Packers. Philadelphia starts its quest Sunday against the Chicago Bears (12-4).

Last year, the Eagles had the luxury of a first-round bye and two home games but few expected them to do much with backup quarterback Nick Foles.

They were the first No. 1 seed to be an underdog in their opening playoff game, a 15-10 win over the Atlanta Falcons. Lane Johnson and Chris Long donned dog masks after that game to symbolize the team's underdog status and it spread throughout the city and continued gaining momentum with each win.

The Eagles were 3-point underdogs against the Vikings in the NFC championship game and won 38-7. They were 4½-point underdogs against the Patriots in the Super Bowl when Foles earned MVP honors in a 41-33 victory.

On wild-card weekend, the combined total of the spread of the other three games is 5½ points while the Bears are 6-point favorites against the Eagles.

"To be an underdog and get back to that, we had to go through a lot as a team because we didn't start out that way this year; it was actually the opposite," Foles said Wednesday. "Then we went through some growing pains. We had to fight through it. It's brought us closer together what's happened, the ups and downs, it's made us strong mentally."

Foles began the season under center because Carson Wentz wasn't ready following knee surgery that forced him out of the lineup in December 2017. The Eagles were 1-1 when Wentz returned in Week 3 and played inconsistent for most of the season. Following a 29-23 overtime loss at Dallas in Week 14, the Eagles were 6-7 and their playoff chances were slim. Then Wentz was sidelined by a back injury.

But Foles stepped in and led Philadelphia, a 13½-point underdog, to a 30-23 win over the Los Angeles Rams on Dec. 16. Foles set a franchise record with 471 yards passing in a 32-30 comeback win over Houston the following game and the Eagles secured a playoff berth with a 24-0 rout over Washington coupled with Chicago's win at Minnesota.

"I know how our team has really fought this last month of the season, last six weeks," coach Doug Pederson said. "And it does give you a little comfort knowing that we've kind of went through this grind and we're here now and we have to continue to grind and continue to work. But I don't think it's any easier. It's a different team again. Different set of circumstances. We have to travel; if we're fortunate to win, we have to be on the road again. It feels different. But the excitement is the same."

George booed in LA, powers Thunder to victory

LOS ANGELES (AP)—Paul George scored 37 points while getting booed whenever he touched the ball by Lakers fans still angry he didn't choose their team in free agency, leading Oklahoma City over Los Angeles, 107, 100.

Russell Westbrook had 14 points, 16 rebounds and 10 assists despite 3-for-20 shooting, but his fellow Southern California native was the center of attention in the Thunder's only visit to the Lakers this season.

George scored nine points in the fourth quarter while the Thunder rallied from a five-point deficit and easily held on for their seventh win in 10 games.

Kentavious Caldwell-Pope scored 18 of his 25 points in the first half for the Lakers, who dropped to 1-3 during LeBron James' absence with a groin injury. Los Angeles has lost six of nine overall after its offense managed just six field goals in the fourth quarter, along with the Lakers' usual awful free-throw shooting.

AP
Oklahoma City Thunder's Paul George, left, is pressured by Los Angeles Lakers' Lonzo Ball during the first half of an NBA basketball game Wednesday, Jan. 2, 2019, in Los Angeles.

Nets 126, Pelicans 121

In New York, D'Angelo Russell had 22 points and 13 assists, and the Brooklyn Nets built up a big enough lead with a 73-point first half to withstand Anthony Davis' monstrous return to the lineup and beat the New Orleans Pelicans.

Davis finished with 34 points and a career-high 26 rebounds after a one-game absence, but there weren't enough rebounds to get in the first half, when the Nets opened a 24-point lead during their highest-scoring first half at home in 17 years.

Joe Harris added 21 points for the Nets, who had 105 points through three quarters, then got consecutive baskets by Harris when New Orleans trimmed the lead to seven with under 5 minutes remaining.

The Nets made nine of their first 15 3-point attempts during their highest-scoring first half at home since getting 75 against Golden State on Feb. 19, 2002. They finished with seven players in double figures, with DeMarre Carroll (19) and Spencer Dinwiddie (18) leading strong efforts off the bench.

Celtics 115, Timberwolves 102

In Boston, Gordon Hayward came off the bench to score a season-high 35 points and the Celtics topped Minnesota.

Terry Rozier scored 11 of his 16 points in the first quarter while making his third start of the season because Kyrie Irving scratched both of his eyes in Monday's game against San Antonio. Hayward took over from there, with 13 in the second quarter and 15 in the third to finish with his highest-scoring game with the Celtics.

Andrew Wiggins scored 31 points, and Karl-Anthony Towns had 20 of his 28 points.

Mavericks 122, Hornets 84

In Charlotte, North Carolina, Luka Doncic and Dennis Smith Jr. fueled an early long-range shooting spree and Dallas beat Charlotte to end a nine-game road skid.

Doncic and Smith each had 18 points, and Harrison Barnes added 17. The Mavericks hit 10 first-quarter 3-pointers – three from Doncic and two from Smith – and finished with 18.

Dallas won for the first time on the road since Nov. 28. It entered the game with a NBA-worst 2-16 road record, compared to 15-3 at home.

Dwight Powell scored 15 points, Wesley Matthews had 11, and DeAndre Jordan had eight points and 13 rebounds.

76ers 132, Suns 127

In Phoenix, Joel Embiid, playing despite a sore left knee, matched his season high with 42 points, 30 in the first half, and grabbed 18 rebounds and Philadelphia held off Phoenix.

Ben Simmons added 29 points and J.J. Redick 27 for the 76ers, who were without Jimmy Butler and Wilson Chandler, both due to an upper respiratory infection. Devin Booker scored 37 points for the Suns. Deandre Ayton added 18 points and 11 boards and Josh Jackson scored 16 points.

Philadelphia led by 23 at halftime and as many as 30 in the third quarter. The Suns cut it to three points before Redick finally sealed the victory with a pair of free throws with 4.3 seconds to play.

Heat 117, Cavaliers 92

In Cleveland, Josh Richardson scored 24 points and Miami—playing with Dwyane Wade sidelined by an illness—rolled past Cleveland.

Miami hit 16 of 31 3-pointers. Tyler Johnson added 16 points, and Derrick Jones Jr. had 13. The Heat have won seven of nine to reach the .500 mark at 18-18.

Cleveland dropped to 8-30—the worst record in the NBA—with its seventh straight loss.

Tristan Thompson and Rodney Hood returned from injuries and started for the Cavaliers, but it mattered little in their ninth loss in 10 games. Thompson had 14 points, and Hood added 13.

Wizards 114, Hawks 98

In Washington, Bradley Beal had 24 points, Jeff Green added 22 and Thomas Bryant had 16 points and a career-high 15 rebounds in Washington's victory over Atlanta.

Tomas Satoransky had 14 points and a career-best 11 rebounds for the Wizards. Alex Len led Atlanta with a season-high 24 points and 11 rebounds. John Collins scored 21 points.

Pistons 101, Grizzlies 94

In Memphis, Tennessee, Blake Griffin had 26 points, eight rebounds and seven assists and Detroit beat Memphis to snap a three-game skid.

Griffin closed out a 13-0 Detroit run in the fourth quarter to put it out of reach, Reggie Jackson added 16 points, and Reggie Bullock and Luke Kennard had 13 each.

Jaren Jackson Jr. led Memphis with 26 points and 10 rebounds, and Kyle Anderson scored 15 points.

Magic 112, Bulls 84

In Chicago, Nikola Vucevic had 22 points and 12 rebounds before sitting out the fourth quarter, Aaron Gordon added 18 points and a career-high nine assists, and Orlando routed Chicago.

Terrence Ross scored 15 off the bench and Evan Fournier had 13 points and seven assists for Orlando. The Magic shot 58 percent from the field.

Zach LaVine had 16 points, and Lauri Markkanen and Kris Dunn added 14 apiece for Chicago.

Tulowitzki agrees to 1-year deal with Yankees

NEW YORK (AP)—The New York Yankees have obtained a low-cost infield replacement, agreeing to a one-year contract with shortstop Troy Tulowitzki for the major league minimum $555,000, a person familiar with the negotiations told The Associated Press.

The person spoke to the AP on condition of anonymity Wednesday because the agreement, first reported by ESPN, is subject to a successful physical.

Tulowitzki idolized retired Yankees captain Derek Jeter and has worn No. 2 in his honor. A five-time All-Star who turned 34 in October, Tulowitzki has not played in the major leagues since July 2017 and was released by the Toronto Blue Jays last month. He was limited to 66 games in 2017 because of a hamstring and right ankle injury. The ankle required surgery last spring and he missed the entire season.

AP

Toronto Blue Jays shortstop Troy Tulowitzki dives for but misses a single hit by Baltimore Orioles' Caleb Joseph during the third inning of a baseball game in Toronto on Wednesday, June 28, 2017.

Yankees shortstop Didi Gregorius had Tommy John surgery on his right elbow on Oct. 17 and is not expected to return until summer. New York also has been talking with Manny Machado, one of the top available free agents. Tulowitzki could slot in at shortstop, allowing Gleyber Torres to remain at second baseman and Miguel Andujar to stay at third.

Tulowitzki was taken by Colorado with the seventh overall pick in the 2005 amateur draft, became a star with the Rockies and agreed after the 2010 season to a $157.75 million, 10-year contract that added $132 million over seven seasons. Colorado dealt him in July 2015 to Toronto in a deal that brought shortstop Jose Reyes to the Rockies.

While Tulowitzki helped the Blue Jays reach that year's AL Championship Series, he slumped the next year and then was derailed by injuries.

Tulowitzki is owed $20 million for next year, $14 million for 2020 and a $4 million buyout of a 2021 team option. Toronto would pay all but the big league minimum in the Yankees deal, which would be offset against his 2018 salary.

Toronto will be paying Tulowitzki for many years: $5 million of his 2019 salary is deferred at 3 percent interest and is payable in 10 equal installments each Jan. 1 from 2025-34. In addition, the buyout is due in $2 million installments on July 1 in 2021 and 2022.

Kikuchi finalizes $56M deal with Mariners

In Seattle, Japanese lefthander Yusei Kikuchi has finalized four-year contract with the Mariners that guarantees $56 million and incudes club options that could make it worth $109 million over seven seasons.

Seattle announced the agreement Wednesday, just ahead of the deadline for the 27-year-old to sign with a major league club.

He receives a $6 million signing bonus and salaries of $8 million this year, $14 million in 2020 and $15 million in 2021. The agreement includes a $13 million player option for 2022, and Seattle has options worth $16.5 million annually for 2022-25.

Seattle has until the third day after the 2021 World Series to exercise all four team options. If the Mariners decline, Kikuchi has until the fifth day after the 2021 World Series to exercise his player option.

"Yusei's combination of character, talent, experience and relative age made him a primary target in our roster building plans," Seattle general manager Jerry Dipoto said. "He is an exciting young pitcher with the ability to impact the Mariners, both in the present and future."

Pulisic to join Chelsea as most expensive American player

DORTMUND, Germany (AP)—Christian Pulisic became the most expensive American soccer player in history after completing a transfer to English club Chelsea from Borussia Dortmund on Wednesday.

Chelsea paid 64 million euros ($73 million) for the 20-year-old United States winger, who will be loaned back to Dortmund for the rest of this season. The German club won't have to pay Chelsea for the loan.

The fee is easily the biggest paid for an American player, surpassing the reported 20 million euros ($22.5 million) spent by German team Wolfsburg for John Brooks in 2017.

"It was always Christian's big dream to play in the Premier League," Dortmund sporting director Michael Zorc said. "That certainly has to do with his American origins, and so it wasn't possible for us to extend his contract."

The Hershey, Pennsylvania-native's contract with Dortmund was due to expire at the end of next season.

"It is a privilege to have signed for such a legendary club," Pulisic said of the London team that has won five Premier League titles since 2005. He thanked Dortmund for "finding a solution that was win-win for everyone."

Pulisic had long been linked with a move to a Premier League club, while Dortmund's league rival Bayern Munich was also reportedly interested.

Despite the price tag, the signing could be somewhat of a coup for Chelsea if it helps the club establish a larger American fan base.

"He's one of the great young talents in the world," former U.S. defender Alexi Lalas wrote on Twitter. "He just happens to be American... which makes him even more valuable. All brands want to continue to mine the fertile U.S. market, having Pulisic doesn't hurt."

It is the most high-profile move secured by an American outfield player, with goalkeepers Tim Howard having previously played for Manchester United and Brad Friedel for Liverpool.

Chelsea director Marina Granovskaia said the club has signed "one of Europe's most sought-after young players."

"At just 20, we believe he has the potential to become an important Chelsea player for many years to come," she said.

Chelsea manager Maurizio Sarri said he was unaware the club was signing Pulisic until a day before it was announced.

"I was asked about him a month ago," said Sarri, speaking after Chelsea's 0-0 draw with Southampton late Wednesday, "and my opinion was positive."

Pulisic, who can play on either wing or behind the striker, has been overshadowed somewhat at Dortmund this season due to the emergence of English youngster Jadon Sancho. Sancho was signed from Manchester City for 8 million pounds ($10 million) in the offseason of 2017 and has already scored six Bundesliga goals and set up nine more this season.

Pulisic has made only 11 league appearances (one goal, two assists) and only five of those were as a starter.

In a message posted on his Twitter account, Pulisic urged Dortmund fans to "not doubt my passion, determination and my 110 percent commitment to the team right until the last ball is kicked this season."

CNMI

From Page 32

was among the players featured on HITC Sevens' video entitled "Best Footballer from Every Country on Earth." HITC Sevens is a company based in United Kingdom with over 100,000 subscribers and posts short football lists on YouTube.

Also featured on the video is Real Madrid and Croatia's Luka Modrić, who won the 2018 Ballon d'Or award to end Lionel Messi and Cristiano Ronaldo's 10-year dominance.

"Being featured as one of the best footballers in every country on earth is a great honor and I am truly grateful for it," said Del Rosario, who donned the Commonwealth's colors on several occasions (both as youth and adult), including in the same competition in Mongolia last year.

"I always work hard and strive to be better than my last game, but I wouldn't have done it without the amazing support of my family, hardworking coaches of the NMI men's national team, officials and staff of the Northern Mariana Islands Football Association, and the rest of the my teammates. Seeing myself in both videos (he also appeared in an earlier video) is like seeing the Blue Ayuyu team as well because they bring the best out in me every time we play," the CNMI vice captain added.

NMIVA

From Page 32

nisms no longer exist."

"We also have limited access to development through NMSA grants on annual basis, but it's not enough to fully run a national federation. In a normal year, we need to raise about $30,000/year, but we rarely reach this goal. We usually fall short at around $15,000/year. But since 2015, we haven't been active, so we are down to our last cash reserves," she added.

To raise funds that will be used to implement its program, NMIVA will try to host competitions quarterly.

"We will shoot for another event some time between March and June 2019 to keep our goal of a minimum of quarterly events going. In the meantime, we will continue to work closely with PSS and CCOPSSA for helping with in-school volleyball activities as scheduled by their respective sport programs," Peterka said.

Meanwhile, NMIVA and the Mt Carmel School Alumni would like to thank the following for supporting tomorrow's 2019 Kickoff Reverse Co-Ed Grass Volleyball Tournament at the Navy Hill Field: UR Tents, John Blanco, Lena Villagomez, and the CNMI Parks & Recs. The two groups would also like to recognize I Love Saipan, QQ Car Rental, and Triple J for providing gift certificates to the winners of this weekend's event.

37th Annual Christmas Island Relay

PHOTOS By ROSELYN B. MONROYO

Agape Christian School A runners raise their arms as they near the finish line of the 37th Annual Christmas Island Relay held last Saturday.

Team Yutu members run to the finish line together.

Team SPC members push hard in the final phase of the race.

Tamio Club members celebrate as they are about to complete the race.

Agape Christian School coach Kok H. Pang, left, joins his runners in celebrating at the finish line.

Robin Hoods runners approach the finish line (Last Command Post in Marpi) of the 13.7-mile race.

Anthony Fruit is on his way to a first place finish in the solo division.

Hoopaholics runners are about to reach the finish line.

George booed in LA, powers Thunder to victory

PAGE 29

Saipan Tribune
Sports

CNMI nat'l players honored

CONTRIBUTED PHOTOS
Enrico del Rosario, left, and Gianna Griffin, are seen here playing for the CNMI in an off-island tournament last year.

NMIVA to raise funds for programs

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association will be more aggressive in holding tournaments and fundraisers to secure funds for its various programs.

"We will be available to help groups fundraise for their own purposes, but we will ask that a percentage of the proceeds remain with NMIVA to help us rebuild, too. Any events that NMIVA initiates going forward (after the Jan. 5 fundraising event of Mt. Carmel School Alumni) will be for the purpose of trying to refill our own reserves so that we can buy new equipment, which is either shared with the community or donated to school programs," NMIVA president Laurie Peterka said.

"We also need funds to hold training courses for coaches, referees, and administrators, or send people to trainings. Our goal for 2019 will be to raise $30,000, which will be really tough, but we want to try. It's a huge challenge with no paid staff," the NMIVA head added.

In the past, NMIVA was able to raise substantial amount to finance its tournaments and other programs, but the association has not been that active in the last three years thus its coffer is running out of reserves. The group also does not get regular financial aid from the government and has limited access to funding from other sources.

"We don't receive any funds from the CNMI government, so everything we do relies entirely on fundraising and all of our volunteers," Peterka said. NMIVA had received some funding from the FIVB and AVC through the OZVA from 2012 to 2016, but those funding mecha-

ROSELYN B. MONROYO
Matthew Berline serves during a Northern Mariana Islands Volleyball Association-association organized beach volleyball tournament last month at the Fiesta Resort & Spa Saipan sand court.

See NMIVA on Page 30

By ROSELYN B. MONROYO
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REPORTER

The CNMI's Gianna Griffin and Enrico Del Rosario ended the season with another feather on their cap after getting recognition from separate groups.

Griffin, who played for the CNMI Women's National Team that competed in the EAFF E-1 Football Championships 2019 Round 1 in Mongolia last year, was named to the Girls Soccer Class 4A All-Section Teams of the Pennsylvania Big 5/6 Athletic Conferences.

The forward made in to the Section 3 First Team, joining 11 others on the select list. Griffin was the only Taylor Allderdice High School player to earn a spot on the elite group, which was dominated by Norwin School District. Allderdice, Norwin, Penn-Trafford, Connelsville, Hempfield, Penn Hills, and Altrobe play in Section 3 in the Western Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic League, which is under the Pennsylvania Interscholastic Athletic Association and has 47 member schools.

Before suiting up for Allderdice for the fall season, Griffin helped the CNMI scare Mongolia in the East Asian Football Federation tournament when she scored the Commonwealth's first goal in the competition. Mongolia went on to avoid the CNMI's upset axe after pulling off a 3-2 victory.

Meanwhile, Del Rosario

See CNMI on Page 30